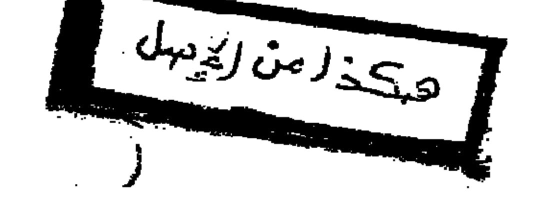


THE TIMES

No. 66,405 FRIDAY JANUARY 8 1999 http://www.the-times.co.uk

25 YEARS ON... How safe is the Pill? page 5

Prince Edward EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW page 7

TOMORROW AY CARUMBA! The Simpsons join the Saturday Times



30p EVERY WEEKDAY

● FREE BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS pages 18, 26 ● WHAT NEXT FOR THE NEW STATESMAN? MEDIA TIMES PAGES 41-44

The President goes on trial

US faces political paralysis

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

THE trial to determine whether William Jefferson Clinton becomes the first President in American history to be removed from office by the Senate opened yesterday to solemn ceremonies not witnessed for 130 years.

But behind the stately scenes prescribed by the Constitution, party leaders' attempts to thrash out the rules of a trial with only one precedent remained in chaos. An appalled nation began last night to contemplate the prospect that the trial could spin into an uncontrollable partisan bloodbath, crippling Republicans as well as their presidential target, and paralysing the nation's politics.

The Senate was voting last night on procedures. The trial will open on Thursday and Republican senators said it could be over by February 12.

In black robes with four gold bands on each arm, Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist took his seat in the centre of the Senate rostrum to begin the trial, calling each of the 100 senators by name to swear the oath.

Earlier, a procession of 13 Republican managers of the House of Representatives crossed Capitol Hill to the Senate to deliver the two articles of impeachment, led by the white-haired, bulky, stooping figure of Henry Hyde, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. In dark suits and white shirts, they formed a solemn semi-circle in the well of the Senate floor as Mr Hyde slowly read the two articles.

Mr Clinton is charged with perjury in giving evidence about his affair with Monica Lewinsky in the Paula Jones civil trial and in the grand jury inquiry led by Kenneth Starr. He is also accused of bringing the office of the presidency into disrepute.

Strom Thurmond, 96, the oldest senator and the longest serving in US history, was given the honour of chairing the initial formalities. Banging the gavel repeatedly, in a quavering Southern accent he ordered an excited and restless Senate to "take your seats or go to the cloakroom".

This is a trial like no other. It has 100 jurors, who can over-ride their judge with a majority vote on any point. It will be held in front of the world's television cameras, which will also eagerly tap the mood of any juror leaving the Senate floor. The rules by which it will be conducted are also in the hands of the jurors, and yesterday remained the focus of bitter fighting.



"Hey, it's a repeat. There was one on in 1868"

In one of the most perilous political gambles in Washington for years, Republican leaders face an "all or nothing" choice. They could hold a micro-trial of a few weeks, with no witnesses, leading to a quick vote. Judging by party whips' feelings, that would leave Mr Clinton in office, free of the Lewinsky albatross.

But a full-scale trial, complete with witnesses, may trigger an all-out war, unpredictable and uncontrollable. That could prove one of the greatest own-goals in American political history, alienating the public, jeopardising the party's control of the House and Senate in 2000, and scuppering its chances of putting a Republican in the White House.

The President's legal army yesterday rode rapidly to exploit that fear. Lawyers warned that if the Senate called a single witness, "all bets are off". They swore to seek a delay in the start of the trial of up to seven months to take depositions. They would challenge the constitutionality of the process on every conceivable point, and call an unknown number of their own witnesses.

Monica Lewinsky is one of the greatest wild cards; she could be called as a witness by either side, and could damage either. In the glare of live television coverage, the Senate would have to question her on the details at the heart of the perjury charge: whether the President directly touched her breasts and genitals, as she claims, contradicting his claim that he never had sexual relations with her.

The tactical quandary has plunged the normally sedate Senate into turmoil. George Washington, the first American President, called the Senate the saucer into which legislative acts were poured to cool, diffusing the boiling heat of the popular passions in the House. But this week, the obstreperous House has revelled in a serene smugness. Having pulled the pin of the impeachment grenade, Republican House members have tossed it across Capitol Hill, leaving their senatorial counterparts to try to control the explosion.

The White House was struggling yesterday to keep up a facade of business as usual. As the Chief Justice was walking onto the Senate floor, the President was sitting down for his weekly lunch with Vice-President Al Gore.

SENATE TV/Reuters



Members of the House of Representatives arriving at the Senate chamber yesterday to deliver the impeachment resolution against President Clinton

Trial opens, pages 2, 3
Letters, page 23

Cancer gene identified

At least half of all cancers could become preventible as a result of the discovery of a gene that plays a vital role in the development of many forms of the disease.

When mutated, the gene not only loses the ability to kill cancer-forming cells but also speeds up their growth. The mutated gene has been linked to lung, breast and colon cancer. Now scientists hope to develop drugs to stop it functioning.

Page 5

Buying The Times overseas
Austria Sch 50; Belgium B Frs 110; Canada $3.50; Canaries Pts 400; Cyprus C£1.20; Denmark Dkr 22.00; Finland Fmk 30.50; France FR 17.00; Germany DM 5.50; Gibraltar 90p; Greece Dr 750; Netherlands Fl 6.50; Italy L 5,000; Luxembourg Lf 110; Madeira Esc 350; Malta 90c; Morocco Dir 30.00; Norway Kr 25.00; Portugal Esc 350; Spain Pts 400; Sweden Skr 25.00; Switzerland S Frs 6.00; Tunisia Din 3,200; USA $3.50.
Periodicals Postage Paid at Rahway NJ [illegible] The [illegible] 365 Blair Road Avenel NJ 07001.

01

9 770140 046251

Building society puts questions to Mandelson

BY CAROLINE MERRELL AND MARK HENDERSON

PETER MANDELSON has been questioned by building society investigators as officials consider reporting him to police over allegations about his mortgage application.

The former Trade and Industry Secretary was interviewed to allow him to put his case to the Britannia Building Society's inquiry. A director is expected to decide today whether to hand the case to the police for possible prosecution.

The investigation by an "enforcement team" followed claims that Mr Mandelson misled the society when applying for the £150,000 mortgage on his home in Notting Hill, London, by failing to disclose the £373,000 loan from Geoffrey Robinson which eventually cost both men their jobs.

The team's findings, which are normally final, have been referred to board level. Further action is usually taken only when the society has suffered financial loss. Any police investigation would probably be handled by Staffordshire Police, the local force at Britannia's Leek headquarters, and a decision to press charges would be made with the Crown Prosecution Service.

Mortgage specialists said yesterday that if Mr Mandelson had declared the £373,000 loan on his form, then it would have been highly unlikely that the society would have granted him the mortgage, as the loans in total then appeared to far outstrip his ability to make repayments on his salary of £40,000 in 1996.

The Britannia said it had referred only a handful of cases to the police. It said if it found a material discrepancy on a borrower's application form, then it would take up the matter with the borrower.

Mr Mandelson will today begin his official rehabilitation by holding talks for the Government with the man who used to be his German ministerial counterpart, Bodo Hombach, to examine common "third way" ground.

Mandelson evidence, page 11
Leading article, page 23

Bank rate cut for fourth time in a row

HOMEOWNERS were given a boost yesterday as the Bank of England cut interest rates in its battle to head off recession (Janet Bush writes).

The Bank's Monetary Policy Committee cut base rates by a quarter point to 6 per cent — the fourth cut in successive months, which took rates back to where they were when Labour took office — and big mortgage lenders immediately followed suit.

The Nationwide said that with rates clearly on a downward trend, there would be more good news to come. However, the Cheltenham & Gloucester, which has five times as many savers as borrowers, said that it would not be able to carry on cutting its rates because while borrowers were doing "cartwheels of ecstasy", savers were left in despair.

Despite such misgivings, yesterday's move was broadly welcomed by business and industy. The MPC said that it had decided to cut rates again in view of evidence that the economy was slowing down and that the risks of inflationary wage demands were abating

Page 27

Gladiator's baby dies in outbreak of meningitis

BY IAN MURRAY AND RUSSELL JENKINS

THE eight-month-old daughter of the former Olympic athlete Judy Simpson has died of meningitis.

Joan Mary Simpson is one of more than a dozen young children to have died in the current outbreak of the illness, which is one of the most severe in recent years.

Unofficial figures show that at least 25 people have died from the disease since Christmas, already more than in the same period last year, when the number of cases reported was the highest for fifty years.



Simpson: too distressed to talk of daughter's death

After an epidemic just after the Second World War, cases fell annually until 1994, when numbers started to rise again. In 1997, 2,266 cases were notified, 243 of whom died. In the first 50 weeks of last year 1,929 cases were notified.

Julia Warren, of the National Meningitis Trust, said its helpline had been swamped with hundreds of people seeking advice over the past four days. "I have never known us to be so busy," she said.

Mrs Simpson, a Commonwealth gold medallist who became Nightshade on the television Gladiators team, and her husband Robin were too distressed to talk about their baby's death yesterday. A private funeral will take place in Birmingham next week.

☐ Up to 3,000 youngsters in Poynton, Cheshire, are to be vaccinated against meningitis after a third confirmed case of a different form of the disease, which killed a local teenager.

Yemen holds five Britons over 'bomb plot'

BY DANIEL MCGRORY IN ADEN AND RICHARD DUCE

FIVE suspected terrorists carrying British passports were being questioned in Yemen last night about the "British link" in an alleged plot to bomb targets in Aden.

The men are being tortured and kept manacled in chains, according to the father of one of them. The prisoners are all British passport holders and the Foreign Office is seeking consular access to them in jail in Aden.

The five, who come from the Birmingham area, travelled out separately to Yemen before the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

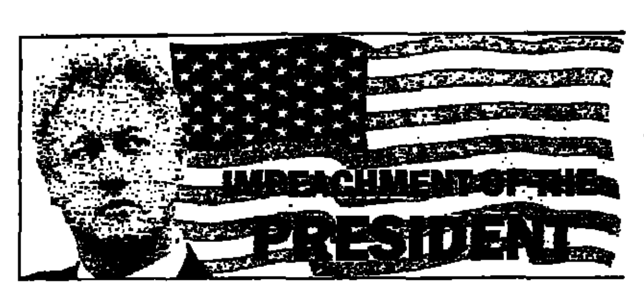
Relatives of Mohsin Ghalain, 18, Shahid Butt, 33, Malik Nassar Harhra, 26, Samad Ahmed, 21, and Ghulam Hussein, 25, who are Muslims, said they had no strong political or extremist views. Yemen officials deny that the five are being made scapegoats for recent terrorist attacks, including the kidnap and murder of western hostages.

One security source said: "These men were found with enough explosives to have caused massive deaths in Aden." When police burst into a room at the Al Wafa hotel they allege that three men were assembling a bomb. They also found satellite telephones in the raids on two tourist hotels.

The same make of satellite telephone was allegedly used by Abu Hassan, the leader of the kidnap gang, who, five days after the alleged bombers were arrested, seized the Western tourists.

Thge only ransom demand the leader of the Al-Jihad made was the release of the British men held in Aden, it is claimed.

'All bets off' in full-scale war



White House risks hidden perils in slog through legal quagmire, writes Damian Whitworth in Washington

THE White House strategy for a full-scale trial of President Clinton is simple: "all bets are off," said its spokesman, Joe Lockhart. The result would be a long, complicated slog through a legal quagmire.

With little prospect of Mr Clinton being convicted by the requisite two thirds of the Senate, the White House had been hoping for a quick trial that would be abandoned after a test vote and lead to nothing more serious than a firm rebuke in the form of a censure.

But his lawyers have been proceeding on the basis that there might be a full-scale trial. As that appeared to be the spectacle in store last night, they were determined to mount a full defence.

There is no whiff of half-measures. "Once you get into a trial, it's a war," said Alan Baron, a prosecutor who has been involved in the impeachment trials of lesser officials.

The tactics of Mr Clinton's legal team, including his old friend and personal attorney David Kendall and his White House lawyers Charles Ruff and Gregory Craig, seem likely to involve every weapon they can get their hands on.

Firstly, the constitutional basis of the trial may be challenged because the Articles of Impeachment were passed by the last Congress. The new one, the 106th, containing an increased number of Democrats, was sworn in this week.

Then, if the prosecution is calling witnesses, the defence will insist on drawing up its own list, to help to pick holes in accusations that Mr Clinton lied under oath about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky and obstructed justice in trying to cover it up.

There could follow a very lengthy process of taking depositions from the witnesses and a period of discovery in which both sides disclose the evidence they intend to present.

THE DEFENCE

Suddenly, the proceedings could take months even before Ms Lewinsky or Mr Clinton's secretary, Betty Currie, or his friend, Vernon Jordan, are summoned to the chamber of the Senate. If and when they do arrive, the cross-examination could be drawn-out, and extraordinary.

Mr Clinton has disputed Ms Lewinsky's account of their intimate relationship. Just how his lawyers approach her will be fascinating.

The White House was clearly trying to raise alarm by painting a picture of a trial stretching out interminably yesterday. But it is certain that a full trial could last many months. Less certain is who would be most damaged — the Republicans, who have pushed for the trial in the face of public opposition and might be hammered in the 2000 elections — or Mr Clinton. He could still be mortally wounded by any new discoveries emerging during the case.

The White House made a last-minute bid yesterday to keep witnesses and new evidence out of the trial by saying it would agree to base its defence solely on the case handed over by the House of Representatives.

"We're willing to have the case tried based on that [House] record," said Mr Lockhart. "If the process becomes wide open and they seek to go beyond the record and they seek to call witnesses, you will then get into a period where there will be motions, there will presumably be discovery and I can't tell you how long that process will take."

Mr Lockhart said that if the proposal were accepted, the White House would still contest the sex and cover-up allegations of prosecutors from the House of Representatives, based on the referral of the independent prosecutor Kenneth Starr. But the White House would not call witnesses to test their credibility.

If a full trial goes ahead it is unlikely that Mr Clinton will take the stand, but it cannot be ruled out completely. The only certainty about the whole year-long saga has been its ability to surprise.



MARCY NIGHSWANDER / AP

Chief Justice William Rehnquist swore in the 100 Senate jurors in yesterday's proceedings

Republicans face their biggest gamble for decades

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

THE PROSECUTION

FOR a brief hour from 1pm yesterday, Republican senators assembled for the formal opening ceremony of the trial of President Clinton, before resuming their frantic attempts to thrash out its rules.

The 55 Republicans in the 100-strong Senate face one of the biggest political gambles that Washington has seen for decades.

If they curtail the trial to a mere few weeks, followed by a quick vote, it is a near-certainty that Bill Clinton will stay in office until his term ends in 2000.

But if they push for a full trial and insist on calling witnesses, "all bets are off", in the warning words of the White House. They would have started not just an unknown and cumbersome legal process, but a war which could sprawl over the rest of the millennium. It would be a fight to the death, which could see Mr Clinton become the first President to be impeached and thrown out of office.

But it could also backfire on Republicans, paralysing the country's legislation for another year, turning the public against them, and squandering the party's control of the House and Senate in the 2000 elections, as well as the chance of putting a Republican into the White House.

At worst, in the eyes of Mr Clinton's critics, he might eventually escape without even a censure or fine, at least partially vindicated by the Republicans' failure to muster a two-thirds majority of the Senate against him after such a bloody battle.

The tactical dilemma has thrown the spotlight on Senate Majority Leader, Trent Lott of Mississippi, best known as a passionate conservative and a fierce critic of Mr Clinton, but who is now trying to broker a deal within his own party to back a short trial.

Yesterday it appeared that Mr Lott was making headway, with more conciliatory tones towards the notion of a short trial coming from the conservative wing.

But the crucial question of whether to call witnesses remains the sticking point, which could scupper his attempts at mediation.

Many Republicans were insisting yesterday that if this procedure is to be a proper trial, the Senate ought to call witnesses.

Those could include Mr Clinton himself, as well as Monica Lewinsky, Mr Clinton's secretary Betty Currie, and Mr Clinton's longtime friend and adviser Vernon Jordan.

On a field of such constitutional muddiness, the threats of alarmists on both sides cannot be dismissed: if war breaks out, it could last for much of the rest of the century.

Letters, page 23

Johnson 'was not fit for the doghouse'

BY TIM HAMES

FOR all the salacious material and obvious difficulty in determining procedure, the Senate trial of Bill Clinton promises to be a positively dignified affair compared with the only other attempt to oust a President, the trial of Andrew Johnson in 1868.

That Senate melodrama came after a period of exceptionally bitter conflict between the President and Congress. Johnson was an utterly accidental occupant of the White House. A southern Democrat who nonetheless supported the Union in the Civil War, he had become Vice-President under the Republican Abraham Lincoln as part of a unity ticket for the election of 1864.

Lincoln's assassination elevated him to the presidency. His qualifications for high office were extremely modest. A low-born and uncouth figure, illiterate until his wife taught him to write, and with a passion for alcohol that matched Bill Clinton's enthusiasm for sex, he was as one contemporary commentator put it, "not fit for the doghouse, never mind the White House".

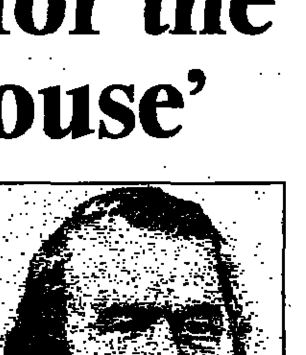
He also favoured an amicable settlement with the southern states and had little enthusiasm for allowing the newly freed slaves political power. That was precisely the opposite combination of policies to those held by the Republican majority in Congress.

On three occasions in less than six months they tried to impeach him. The first time their efforts fell short by one vote in the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee. The second attempt, four months later, passed in the committee but failed on the House floor.

The third time, however, after Johnson ignored the Tenure of Office Act, 1867, and improperly dismissed his Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, the House completed the whole process of impeachment in little more than 48 hours.

It then fell to the Senate to determine Johnson's future. It handled matters with a little more decorum and rather less haste than the House of Representatives. It was still, though, something less than a model of judicial behaviour.

After a 74-day trial, presided over by a shamelessly biased Chief Justice who favoured keeping Johnson because he thought this might win him, the Chief Justice, the Democratic Party nomination for President, the Senate pronounced its opinion. Johnson was saved by a single vote.




Johnson: passion for alcohol

ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT

Accusations that led to Senate trial

TWO articles of impeachment were passed by the House of Representatives last month against President Clinton, and led to his trial in the Senate. Articles II and IV were rejected. *Resolution impeaching William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors. Resolved, that William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, is impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors, and that the following articles of impeachment be exhibited to the United States Senate: Articles of impeachment exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States of America in the name of itself and of the people of the United States of America, against William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States of America, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high crimes and misdemeanors.*

Article I: In his conduct while President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, in violation of his constitutional oath faithfully to execute the office of the President of the United States, and to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, and in violation of his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, has wilfully corrupted and manipulated the judicial process of the United States for his personal gain and exoneration, impeding the administration of justice, in that:

On August 17, 1998, [he] swore to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth before a federal grand jury . . .

Contrary to that oath, [he] wilfully provided perjurious, false and misleading testimony to the grand jury concerning one or more of the following:

(1) the nature and details of his relationship with a subordinate government employee;

(2) prior perjurious, false and misleading testimony he gave in a federal civil rights action brought against him;

(3) prior false and misleading statements he allowed his attorney to make to a federal judge in that civil rights action; and

(4) his corrupt efforts to influence the testimony of witnesses and to impede the discovery of evidence in that civil rights action. In doing this, [he] has undermined the integrity of his office, has brought disrepute on the presidency, has betrayed his trust as President, and has acted in a manner subversive of the rule of law and justice, to the manifest injury of the people of the United States. Wherefore, William Jefferson Clinton, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honour, trust or profit under the United States.

Article III In his conduct, while President . . . William Jefferson Clinton, in violation of his constitutional oath . . . has prevented, obstructed, and impeded the administration of justice, and has to that end engaged personally, and through his subordinates and agents, in a course of conduct or scheme designed to delay, impede, cover up, and conceal the existence of evidence and testimony related to a federal civil rights action brought against him in a duly instituted judicial proceeding. The means used to implement this course of conduct or scheme included one or more of the following acts:

(1) On or about December 17, 1997, [he] corruptly encouraged a witness in a federal civil rights action brought against him to execute a sworn affidavit in that proceeding that he knew to be perjurious, false and misleading.

(2) On or about December 17, 1997, [he] corruptly encouraged a witness in a federal civil rights action brought against him to give perjurious, false and misleading testimony if and when called to testify personally in that proceeding.

(3) On or about December 28, 1997, [he] corruptly engaged in, encouraged, or supported a scheme to conceal evidence that had been subpoenaed in a federal civil rights action brought against him.

(4) Beginning on or about December 7, 1997, and continuing through and including January 14, 1998, [he] intensified and succeeded in an effort to secure job assistance to a witness in a federal civil rights action brought against him in order to corruptly prevent the truthful testimony of that witness in that proceeding at a time when the truthful testimony of that witness would have been harmful to him.

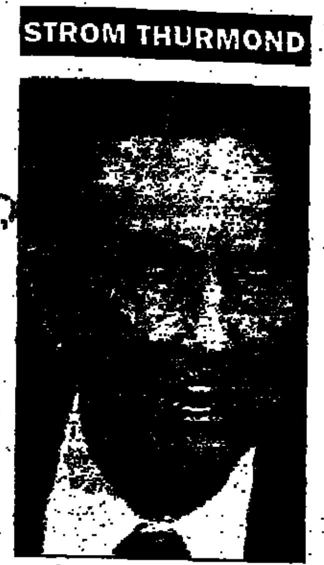
(5) On January 17, 1998, at his deposition in a federal civil rights action brought against him, [he] corruptly allowed his attorney to make false and misleading statements to a federal judge characterising an affidavit, in order to prevent questioning deemed relevant by the judge. Such false and misleading statements were subsequently acknowledged by his attorney in a communication to that judge.

(6) On or about January 18 and 20-21, 1998, [he] related a false and misleading account of events relevant to a federal civil rights action brought against him to a potential witness in that proceeding, in order to corruptly influence the testimony of that witness.

(7) On or about January 21, 23, and 26, 1998, [he] made false and misleading statements to potential witnesses in a federal grand jury proceeding in order to corruptly influence the testimony of those witnesses. The false and misleading statements made by [him] were repeated by witnesses to the grand jury, causing [it] to receive false and misleading information. In all of this, [he] has undermined the integrity of his office, has brought disrepute on the presidency, has betrayed his trust as President, and has acted in a manner subversive to the rule of law and justice, to the manifest injury to the people . . . Wherefore, William Jefferson Clinton, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honour, trust or profit under the United States. *(Reuters)*

World watches trial of century

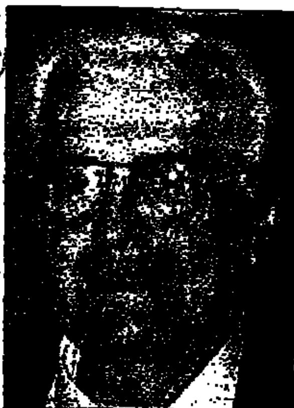
STROM THURMOND



The liveliest figure and president of the Senate

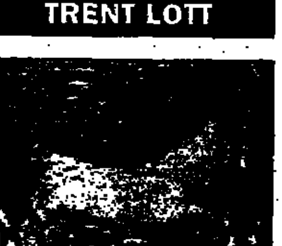


HENRY HYDE



Events left him "depressed, a little bit jittery"

TRENT LOTT



Senate Majority Leader and critic of the President

SENATE TV / REUTERS



Trent Lott signs the official oath book after being sworn in by Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist yesterday at the opening of President Clinton's trial

CLINTON TEAM



David Kendall, President Clinton's private attorney



Charles Ruff, the counsel for the White House

Sense of disbelief prevails as solemn pageant unfolds

By Damian Whitworth in Washington

IT IS only a short stroll across the Capitol from the House of Representatives to the Senate, but for 13 men yesterday it was a walk into history. For the first time in 131 years the trial of a sitting President opened amid rare Washington pageantry. The atmosphere was one of solemnity but also of disbelief. There were moments of mild absurdity.

These men represented those who had brought the country to this position by passing two articles of impeachment against Bill Clinton, 42nd President of the United States. The 13 were the "managers" who will be outlining the prosecution case, and yesterday they formally delivered the articles to the Senate to allow the trial to begin.

At any other time they would be anonymous members of the House, unknown to the rest of America, of interest only to those in Washington who sit on the same committees or run their errands along the corridors of the Hill. But as members of the Judiciary Committee that held hearings into Mr Clinton's conduct relating to his affair with Monica Lewinsky, they have become known to — though perhaps not loved by — millions of television viewers.

At their head was Henry Hyde, a stooped bear of a man who has a face that appears often to be either smiling uneasily or wincing. A smile yesterday was unlikely, whatever his Democratic enemies might say. He confessed later that the events had left him "depressed, a little bit jittery". Among his 12 Republican disciples was James Sensenbrenner, a bulldog from Wisconsin who marched forward, his head up, chin out. If anyone got in his way on the walk to the Senate, he looked as though he would punch their lights out.

There too was Asa Hutchinson, a former US attorney from Arkansas who prosecuted the President's brother, Roger, for cocaine dealing. His own brother is a senator who will be weighing the charges he will be helping to present. He showed no concern, swaggering a little, his hand in his pocket.

As the group paused beneath the rotunda, some glanced upwards at Constantino Brumidi's fresco of the *Apotheosis of Washington*, showing the first President accompanied by Liberty, Victory and Fame. Under the great dome they were handed over by an official of the House to the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate. It was a symbolic moment, the passing of their business from the lower House to the upper — the body that Washington compared with a saucer in which the decisions of the people's representatives, who could be an excitable lot, should be put to cool.

№ 1

106[TH] CONGRESS—FIRST SESSION

United States Senate

Impeachment Trial of the

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

ADMIT BEARER TO THE SENATE FAMILY GALLERY

Sergeant at Arms United States Senate

A ticket for one of the 50 seats in the 596-seat Senate chamber to be handed out to members of the public each day

The 13 blinked in the flashlights of photographers, a group absent the only other time members of the House were sent on such a mission: the 1868 trial of Andrew Johnson. Aside from fashion and banks of lenses, the scene that greeted the managers as they shuffled into the chamber was very similar to Johnson's day. The senators sat at desks in rows like schoolboys, with a few schoolgirls too this time. Up in the galleries the competition for seats was as intense as it was then. In 1848 the audience was notable for being packed with the mistresses of senators dressed in their finery. It was harder to tell if such was the case this time but it appeared that there were more advisers taking up the spots allotted to the 100 members of the jury. The public had been queuing since the chilly dawn for the 50 seats allowed them and, like the press, were given a few minutes each in the chamber to give as many people as possible a flavour of the historic proceedings.

"I wanted to see what could be the trial of the century," said Suzanne Garrow, 36, a lawyer from Northampton, Massachusetts. "I'm trying to check out the scene and be a part of history," said Stevan Johnson, 31, of Washington.

By far the liveliest figure in the entire place was Strom Thurmond, the 96-year-old from south Carolina, who is the longest-serving senator ever, and president pro-tempore of the Senate. It was a little confusing because everyone kept calling him President. Mr President himself is unlikely to appear.

Mr Thurmond hammered away with the gavel: "Either take your seats or be in the cloakroom," he barked. His patrician colleagues did not hurry and he rapped some more. Mr Thurmond handed over the policing to the Sergeant at Arms, Jim Ziglar. "Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! All persons are required to keep silence, on pain of imprisonment, while the House of Representatives is exhibiting the articles of impeachment against William Jefferson Clinton."

Eventually there was quiet. The sense of disbelief that this point had been reached was almost tangible. It had seemed impossible, months ago, that this sorry saga would ever end in trial, but the scandal has had as many comebacks as Mr Clinton himself.

Mr Hyde, who read out the articles of impeachment, was perhaps not the best choice for the task. He speaks too quickly and let the sentences run into each other. It was also hard to concentrate on all his talk of undermining the integrity of office and failure to execute the laws because he had a cold and sniffed throughout. His left hand meanwhile conducted a search of his pockets for a hankie. One was eventually located and his nose was dabbed.

Television pundits had excitedly previewed the pageant as being similar to the State Opening of Parliament. But really they were talking things up. Although it is only a very short step across the road for the Chief Justice, William Rehnquist, from the Supreme Court to the Senate, the event was adjourned for nearly three hours for him to arrive.

Then somebody mentioned that the bars on his robes were inspired by a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. When he arrived for the swearing-in of the 100 senators, there was an anxious moment as it looked as though Mr Thurmond, who was uneasily clutching the desk, might fall over. Mr Rehnquist raised his hand to take the oath and Mr Thurmond leaned forward. Was this some new attempt at ceremony? Was the Chief Justice, no spring chicken himself, about to slap Mr Thurmond on the head. He did not. And the slow process of swearing in the 100 senators began.

The name of each was portentously intoned and they came forward to sign their names. A trial, the like of which no one alive has seen, was open.



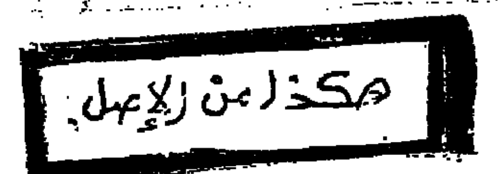
NET LINKS

www.pbs.org/newshour/impeachment/ — Online NewsHour: the impeachment hearings, excerpts and analysis.

www.washingtonpost.com/ — The Washington Post

www.drudgereport.com — The independent political Web magazine that first exposed the Lewinsky affair.

www.zdnet.com/yil/content/specials/washscandal/clinton.html Clinton Sex Scandal: The Saga Continues - a review of news coverage



Gene find may lead to cancer prevention

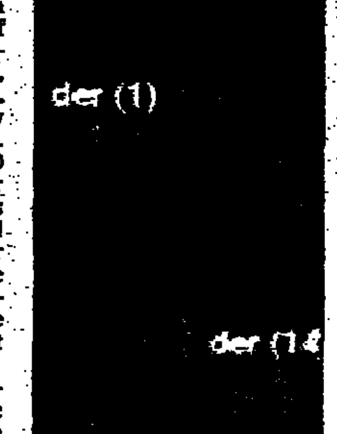
Researchers hope discovery will lead to a drug that can stop tumours developing, writes **Sue Lappeman**

SCIENTISTS have isolated a gene that plays a vital role in the development of many of the most common forms of cancer, including that of the lung, breast and colon. As a result, at least half of all cancers may eventually become preventible.

The isolation of the Bcl10 gene at the Institute of Cancer Research has been hailed as an historic discovery that will have a major impact on cancer research. Scientists hope the finding will lead to the development of a drug to stop the gene *from functioning* and prevent cancers from developing.

The mutated gene was discovered in an extremely rare type of tumour found in the stomach of a 75-year-old man being treated for a chest complaint in a Portsmouth hospital ten years ago. The unknown man, who has since died, was unknowingly suffering from B-cell non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, of which there are only about 20 known cases. His family was unaware of the impact his illness could have on the future treatment of cancer.

Martin Dyer, the research team leader at the institute, said that analysis of the man's tumour showed that, when mutated, the Bcl10 gene not



Villain of the piece: the mutant gene, der(14)

only lost the ability to kill off cancer-forming cells but speeded up their growth in tumours by transforming normal cells and making them malignant. The team then found the same mutated gene in some of the most common forms of cancer, among them those of the lung, breast and colon.

Dr Dyer said: "This is a very exciting discovery, which shows the value of studying rare cases of malignancy, as the lessons learnt may be applicable to the more common forms of the disease."

He said the discovery of Bcl10 was extremely important to the understanding of the complex disease and ultimately to finding a cure for the "big" cancers that threatened the lives of so many people.

He said: "We would like to think that, if we can target the mutated forms of the protein and suppress their functions, and/or reintroduce the normal cell death function — the killing function of the protein — then it could be useful therapeutically. That's our hope."

Even if the continuing research is successful, the development of a new drug would still be several years away.

Bcl10 is only the second gene to be discovered that is implicated in such a large number of cancers. The first was P53, which was abnormal in about 50 per cent of all cancers; preliminary results indicate that Bcl10 is contributing to the development of at least as many.

Professor Peter Garland, the institute's chief executive, said the discovery was a remarkable one that would have a major impact on the direction of cancer research.

He said: "In the future it may be possible to develop new treatments which will prevent the abnormal *Bcl10* gene from functioning in a way which causes cancers to develop. For example, mutated Bcl10 may provide a suitable target for the design of a new cancer drug."

The research, a collaboration between the Institute of Cancer Research, the Leukaemia Research Fund, the Kay Kendall Leukaemia Fund and the Cancer Research Campaign, was accelerated by the recent development at the institute of a method for rapidly cloning the DNA sequence to allow access to a complete gene.



Tony Willis, left, and Martin Dyer at the research institute



RUSSELL BOYCE

Valerie Beral: "We can reassure women that later illness is not because of the Pill"

Injury link to breast cancer

By Nigel Hawkes
Science Editor

INJURIES to the breast may contribute to the development of cancer, a new study has suggested.

Women with breast cancer were more than four times as likely to report that they had suffered breast injuries than healthy women, Jan Rigby, of the University of Lancaster, told the Royal Geographical Society — Institute of British Geographers conference.

In the study, 67 breast cancer patients between the ages of 50 and 64 were compared with healthy women of the same age. Each was interviewed *about her medical history*, diet, smoking and drinking habits, and other factors.

"A significant proportion of the cancer patients had experienced an accident or injury to the breast in the five years before cancer developed," Ms Rigby told the conference at Leicester University yesterday.

"Most of these were falls in the home where the breast hit something. A minority were the result of physical abuse. The injuries generally were serious enough to cause bruising or bleeding."

Among the breast cancer patients, 52 per cent reported *breast injuries, while only 12* per cent of the healthy women did. Ms Rigby acknowledged the fact that women with cancer were more likely to remember a breast injury than were healthy women.

A spokeswoman for the National Breast Cancer Screening Programme expressed some doubt over the findings. "There have been extensive investigations of injuries to the breast, and there has never been been a relationship with breast cancer found before," she said.

Conference reports, page 14

Pill does no long-lasting damage to health

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

THERE is no long-term health danger from the Pill, research has shown. The largest and longest study among women using oral contraceptives has indicated that, ten years after stopping the Pill, they are no more likely to die from illness than those who have never taken it.

The 25-year study involved 46,000 women, two thirds of whom took the Pill. Although it bears out earlier studies, which show there is a slightly greater risk of Pill users developing some cancers or heart disease, it shows clearly that this risk disappears completely ten years after stopping the Pill.

"This must be reassuring to all women," said Clifford Kay, who set up the study for the Royal College of General Practitioners in 1968. "We have known there probably has always been a lurking fear that something dreadful would pop up among women on the Pill after ten, 20 or 25 years. This study shows that we don't need to worry about that any longer."

The women in the study were recruited by 1,400 GPs all over Britain during 1968 and 1969. Half of the women were then on the Pill, although a third of the others later took the contraceptive.

A detailed study of this kind could be carried out only in Britain because the NHS *made it possible to track all* the women and find out exactly who had been prescribed the Pill and for how long.

The average age of the women was 25 at the start of the survey. Most took the Pill for two years, although some were on it for up to ten years and the average duration was five years. Regardless of how long they were on it, the findings were the same.

At the time the volunteers were recruited, the Pill usually being prescribed contained a medium level of oestrogen. The Pill being prescribed most often at present to the three million women in Britain who are on it contains only half the amount used in the 1970s and is therefore even less likely to increase the risk of ill-effects for those taking it.

The researchers, from the Royal College and the Imperial Cancer Research Fund epidemiology unit in Oxford, traced the records of all those in the study who died up to the end of 1993. Of the 1,599 deaths, cancer was responsible for 829 deaths and heart disease or strokes for 380. Other deaths were due to a variety of diseases as well as accidents and suicide. One woman died in childbirth.

The 259 deaths from breast cancer and 51 from cervical cancer were slightly above the normal rate for those diseases, although the 55 deaths from ovarian cancer were fewer than expected, suggesting that the Pill provides some protection.

The vast majority of the women in the survey stopped taking the Pill at least 17 years ago, so the researchers can judge accurately whether there are any long-term effects.

Valerie Beral, director of the Oxford unit and author of the report, said the results were conclusive. "We can reassure women that, if they get some illness later in life, it is not because they once took the Pill," she said. "Our new figures *show that, by the time women* who've used the Pill have been off it for ten years, their risk of developing these conditions is similar to what it would have been if they had never taken the Pill at all."

Toni Belfield, of the Family Planning Association, welcomed the report, which is published in the *British Medical Journal* today. She said that, from the 100,000 inquiries the association received each year, it was clear that many women were not confident about taking the Pill, so the findings should go some way to allaying their fears.

Keeping up with life on the corset index

Alexandra Frean on 50 years of official attempts to figure out just how much the times have changed

THEY were the days when people knew the really important things in life. The price of back-lacing corsets, iron bedsteads, condensed milk and unskinned wild rabbits were used in measuring inflation, and a wireless licence was the nearest thing to a subscription to the Internet.

A detailed insight into major trends in British life took the late 1940s as its starting point yesterday, as the official yearbook of the United Kingdom celebrated its 50th edition. In demonstrating that Britons are healthier and richer now, it also showed just how quickly the times have changed.

Nigel Pearce, editor of the current edition, *Britain 1999*, said that, in its early years, the book was used largely as a propaganda tool by British diplomats stationed overseas to paint a glowing, if not entirely accurate, picture of life back home. Embarrassing or unattractive facts, such as figures on pollution, might occasionally be "kept discreetly out of the book", he said.

Today it is said to be far more impartial. While it shows that we are now less likely to be killed on the roads, it admits that we will spend far more of our lives sitting in traffic jams and are many times more likely to come from a broken home.

One of the most revealing insights into how daily life and tastes have changed is provided by the basket of goods and services used to calculate the retail price index. In 1947 it included: wild rabbits (unskinned), lard, condensed milk, back-lacing corsets, a gallon of lamp oil, an iron bedstead, a hair mattress, gramophone records (78s), a rubber-roller table mangle, tin of distemper, a pound of soda and a wireless licence.

The basket for 1997 included burgers, fromage frais, takeaways, tracksuit bottoms, a smoke alarm, a microwave oven, a subscription to the Internet, contact lenses, a portable CD player, computer games, unleaded petrol and private medical insurance.

The way people spend their money also indicates changing priorities. A third of spending now goes on services, such as electricity, gas, water, postage, telephones, holidays, recreation and entertainment, compared with less than a tenth 50 years ago.

Mr Pearce said that, for him, the most significant change had been the way that advances in technology had caused electricity to take over virtually every aspect of our lives. He added: "What is also remarkable is the accelerating rate of change."

The book has been published virtually every year since 1946, with a few gaps in the 50s. When it first came out, the country was recovering from the war and rationing was still in place.

Since then, the most significant health statistic is that life expectancy has increased by about nine years. In 1948 40 per cent of deaths occurred under the age of 65. By 1996 the proportion had fallen to 17 per cent.

The widespread introduction of antibiotics is partly responsible for this, with the number of deaths from infectious diseases falling from more than 30,000 in 1948 to fewer than 4,000 in 1996.

Widespread immunisation for common diseases has also had a huge impact, particularly on children's health. Between 1948 and 1968, notifications of measles were running at about 400,000 a year. In 1995, there were 7,447.

There have also been improvements to environmental health. In 1957 there was no fish population in the Thames between Kew in the West and Gravesend in the East, largely because output from London's Victorian sewer system had starved the river of oxygen. After a concerted clean-up, there are now 116 species of fish in the upper Thames Estuary.

In home life, one in 13 families were headed by a single parent in 1971, compared with nearly one in four today. There has also been a steady rise in the number of one-person households, up from 14 per cent of all households in 1961 to 27 per cent in 1997.

Transport figures have changed enormously. In 1956 there were more than 3.75 million cars licensed to use Britain's roads and more than 1.25 million motorcycles. Ten years later the number of licenced cars was 9.5 million and, by 1996, it had leapt to 22 million, although the number of motorcycles, scooters and mopeds had fallen to 739,000. Much of this astonishing growth in road traffic has been at the expense of the railways. The first handbook, published in 1946, states that "the four main railway companies had a total track mileage, including sidings, of about 50,000 miles." Today, the network is 20,000 miles.

More than half of the 17,000 copies of the handbook are still supplied to the Foreign Office, but its production has been moved from the Central Office of Information to the Office for National Statistics.

Reviewing the figures, Mr Pearce said: "It remains to be seen whether such a breakneck state of flux can be sustained into the next millennium or whether it will broaden out into a slower-paced estuary of measured planning and reflection."

OH, I SAY

ONE quaint way in which social and cultural changes can be illustrated is in the prose styles used in the handbook over the decades. As you read this extract from *Britain 1956* on leisure pursuits, you can almost hear the clipped tones of a 1950s dinner-suited BBC radio presenter.

"The public house now attracts a very wide circle of casual customers (both men and women) as well as many 'regulars', who meet for a drink and a chat, and perhaps to play some traditional public-house game such as darts. A new, and in some ways rival, feature of urban life, especially in London, is the coffee bar. A characteristic of many of these coffee bars, which stay open until late at night and are becoming increasingly popular as a rendezvous for young people, is their modern decor ..."



A bread queue in 1946: rationing was still in place when the guide began. Today the shopping list has changed out of all recognition

Aussie taunts ruin Poms' paradise

By A Correspondent

BRITONS who emigrate Down Under are being driven home by anglophobic Australians, a survey has found. An average of 240 Britons move to Australia each week, but at least 80 of them return because their neighbours are not as friendly as those in Ramsay Street.

The survey, carried out by the United Kingdom Settlers' Association in Melbourne, found that 39 per cent felt that anglophobia was rife in Australia, and that 31 per cent felt that their complaints were not taken as seriously those made by other minorities.

Barry Hunter, of the UKSA, said that name-calling, hostile media coverage and demeaning stereotypes all played a part in ruining the great Australian dream.

"A lot of people call the British 'Poms', and there are many variations on that name. 'Whingeing Pommie bastard' is a pretty common one," he said. "It's half jocular and half serious, but many people just don't like it."

Mr Hunter said that the English also took offence to such sayings as "Gimme a beer, I'm as dry as a Pommie's bath towel," which implied that they didn't wash enough. "A few days ago ... a man I had never seen before came up to me and said: 'Why don't you go back to England?' He then gave me the 'V' sign.

"There are so many snide comments about the British in the media ... hearing about Prince Edward's engagement, a radio reporter said: 'And now we have to put up with yet another royal wedding.'"

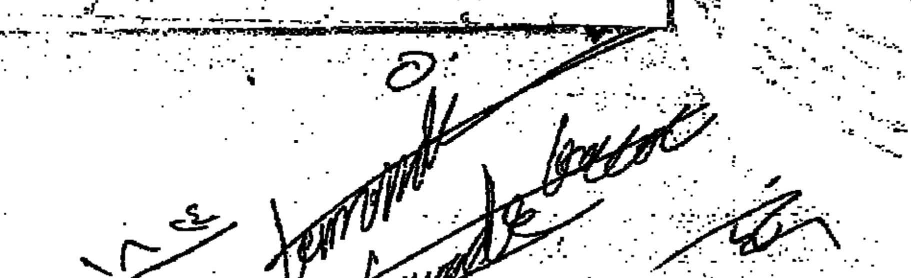
Penelope Lisles, 25, who returned to Britain after two years in Australia, said: "When I first started looking for a job, no one would even give me an interview when they found out I was British. And there's all that whingeing Pommie stuff — constantly."

End of the tinkling mobile

MOBILE phones are increasingly at risk of being damaged by male users who drop them in the lavatory while fiddling with zips and belts, repairers have revealed.

Hundreds are letting their phones slip through their fingers, according to Coverplan. The worst culprits are men who take the phones with them to the gents in pubs and clubs, said the firm, which handles extended warranty repairs for Dixons.

Michael Marks, Coverplan's marketing director, said: "Amazingly, an increasing number of people admit they were talking on them in the loo. Young men should think again to stop their prize possession becoming ruined. Just two seconds underwater will wreck a mobile."



The producer Prince goes back to work

Engagement did not long distract Prince Edward from his other great love, Michael Harvey writes

FOR Prince Edward, work comes first. After all the engagement fuss and photocalls, he was back yesterday where he feels he belongs — behind his desk at Ardent Productions, his television production company.

Now that the announcement of his engagement to Sophie Rhys-Jones is out of the way, the Prince, who prefers to be called Edward Windsor, can concentrate on getting on with his job.

He told *The Times* yesterday that it was only after Ardent had "turned the corner" that he decided the time was right to propose. Like any modern professional couple, he and Miss Rhys-Jones wanted to wait until their careers were on an even keel.

"Basically there was no point in starting Ardent and starting married life at the same time. That would have been silly," he said. "Apart from anything else we weren't ready then."

The Prince loves his work, but being a member of the Royal Family as well as a television producer does have its disadvantages. Many broadcasters are so keen to avoid the appearance of currying favour that his ideas and programmes have to be much better than other producers'.

"In the [United] States, they tend to accept you on your credentials and don't get too hung up about background. Over here people are more nervous about appearing to be in any way sucking up," he said.

"Ardent does its level best not to trade on the name. But nine times out of ten the first idea which they want Ardent to make has got a royal connection.

"But once they have made the first one, they want to move on to other things. We have proved our ability to be able to make good programmes consistently and the broadcasters with whom we have a good relationship understand that."

The Prince, 34, is confident that the company will succeed, despite five years of losses amounting to £1.5 million.

"We are about to enter the busiest year of our existence. It has been building over the last year and broadcasters are now asking us to make programmes," he said.

In 1998 the company almost broke even. With up to 40 programmes between the drawing board and completion in the next 18 months, 1999 should see Ardent in profit for the first time.

"We are looking at 20 to 25 hours of programmes in development," he said. "Suddenly we are hitting an enormous workload. We are talking to a number of different clients and broadcasters in Britain, Europe and America."

"You know that some are going to fall by the wayside, you know that some are going to get delayed, but that is more than we have ever had. We always wanted to be an international company. The development of clients and the connections overseas is where it is all beginning to happen."

The Prince, who is head of production, speaks with the enthusiasm of a man who has found his true vocation.

"Nothing is more fun that coming up with an idea, selling it to somebody, getting them to say yes and then going out and making it," he said.

"It is great. You live on the edge and when it is all buzzing with people running around, it is a thoroughly exciting job."

It has not always been so much fun. Edward set up Ardent with a close friend, Eben Foggitt, in cramped offices in Charlotte Street in December 1993. By 1995 they had only got four hours of programmes on air. The following year saw the failure of the Channel 4 political sitcom *Annie's Bar*, which was almost universally panned. In 1997 business dipped alarmingly.

But last June Ardent moved to its new premises in the Old Stables at Bagshot Park, the 120-year-old mansion that will be the Prince's marital home. There is ample space for the several production offices, all of which have become hives of activity.

Last year began with the commissioning of *The Cater Street Hangman*, a pilot for a series of Victorian detective dramas. The murder mystery is the first of the Inspector Pitt novels by Anne Perry, whose



Prince Edward: "an enormous workload"

27 books are massively popular in America. Prince Edward spoke personally the writer and has bought the rights to the entire series. Anne Perry is perhaps better known in Britain as the New Zealand teenager who helped to murder her best friend's mother in in 1954. The crime inspired the film *Heavenly Creatures*, which starred Kate Winslet.

The *Cater Street* film was broadcast on ITV in September and in the US on the Arts and Entertainment channel just before Christmas. Three more two-hour mysteries are in development in a deal worth more than £1.5 million.

Such mainstream drama is where the Prince sees Ardent's future. He has no wish to provide further ammunition for those who say his company is trading off his name.

The Prince is still uncomfortable with media attention, despite his polished performance in front of the cameras at his engagement announcement, which he said went "as well as could be expected".

He wants to throw himself back into Ardent and plan as private a wedding as the public will allow. While reporters can no longer grill him about whether he will marry Miss Rhys-Jones, he said that they were bound to come up with a new question.

"I dread to think what it is going to be."

□ The Prince of Wales is to visit the Falkland Islands and Argentina in March as part of a Foreign and Commonwealth initiative to rebuild relations. The week-long visit will include official engagements in Port Stanley and Buenos Aires, and a courtesy call in Uruguay. It comes after an official visit to London in October by President Menem of Argentina.

GAVIN FOGG



Sophie Rhys-Jones returns to her office yesterday, insisting there is work to be done

Confident fiancée charms the press pack

By Claudia Joseph and Michael Harvey

SOPHIE RHYS-JONES returned to work yesterday, eager to prove that, despite becoming a royal fiancée, it was business as usual.

She arrived at her office in Mayfair with a police escort to be greeted by hordes of reporters. While Prince Edward was hidden away in his television production offices at Bagshot Park, Surrey, she was lapping up the attention of the press.

Outside R-JH Public Relations, she said: "I have set this company up and I have commitments to clients and staff. I want to carry that on."

Her confident attitude was in contrast to that of the shy Lady Diana Spencer, with whom comparisons have inevitably been drawn.

Miss Rhys-Jones said she was looking forward to life in the public eye, although she was exhausted by the recent attention. Asked about how she would avoid the curse of previous royal weddings, she replied, smiling: "I will see about that when it happens."



Liz Shankland with her husband, Gerald Toms

Bride announces: give Mrs a miss

By Simon de Bruxelles

A NEWLY married female executive has spent £40 on a newspaper advertisement attacking the "misguided fuddy-duddies" who disapprove of her keeping her maiden name.

Liz Shankland, 35, married Gerald Toms, 46, a police superintendent, two months ago. It is a second marriage for both. Ms Shankland decided to keep her own name both professionally and personally. But she became increasingly exasperated by people who insisted on addressing her as Mrs Gerald Toms.

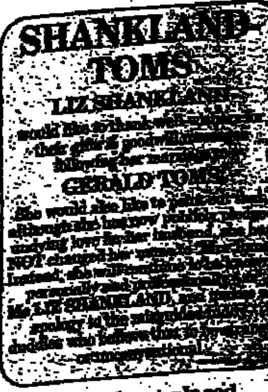
She did not tell her husband, who is stationed at Cardiff, that she was placing the double-column advertisement in the Welsh newspaper *The Western Mail*.

After thanking friends for their gifts and goodwill messages, Ms Shankland wrote: "She would also like to point out that, although she has now publicly pledged undying love for her husband, she has *not* changed her name to Mrs Toms. Instead she will continue to be known — personally and professionally — as Ms *Liz Shankland* and makes no apology to the misguided fuddy-duddies who believe that to be strange or unconventional."

She said yesterday: "I'm no raving feminist, but I believe strongly that a woman should be able to retain her identity when she marries."

Mr Toms, who was responsible for security at last year's European Summit in Cardiff, said: "Liz is a professional in her own right, and I understand and respect her decision."

John Morgan, associate editor of *GQ*, who writes in *The Times* on etiquette, said: "She is entitled to call herself by whatever name she wants."



SHANKLAND-TOMS

LIZ SHANKLAND

GERALD TOMS

The advert placed in *The Western Mail*

Desert Fox air crew return to their families

Shirley English sees emotional homecoming of RAF personnel to their base in Scotland

THE British servicemen and women who took part in the airstrikes against Iraq spoke of the terror of combat and their fear of hitting civilian targets, as they arrived back in Scotland yesterday.

After spending two months in the Gulf for Operation Desert Fox, the 150 members of 12 Squadron, the RAF Tornado Fighters, returned to their base at Lossiemouth, Moray, to an emotional welcome.

Waiting on the Tarmac was the Defence Secretary, George Robertson, and air force chiefs, alongside wives, girlfriends and children. Despite the freezing drizzle, the families wore broad smiles as their loved ones stepped off the Lockheed Tristar transport aircraft to the sound of a piper playing *Scotland the Brave*. The mood on the eight-hour flight from Ali-al-Salem in Kuwait had been euphoric, one pilot said.

Families clapped and cheered when the Tristar came into view in the blustery skies over Lossiemouth, escorted by two Tornado bombers from the 617 Dambuster Squadron. It landed at 12.22pm, two minutes behind schedule, after a journey of over 3,000 miles.

Wing Commander Steve Barnes, 36, was first off the plane. After shaking hands with Mr Robertson he turned to embrace his wife, Zoë, 28, whom he last saw in October. She said later: "My face ached because I had been smiling so much. It was so exciting seeing all the guys come back fit and well."

Moments later wives and children ran forward to greet husbands and fathers. Squadron Leader Andy Box, 34, a senior engineer, said that being reunited with his family felt "just like Christmas when you're a four-year-old".

Embracing his wife, Lesley, 35, and children, Emma, 2, and Christopher, 4, he said: "We are going to have Christmas all over again. It's wonderful to be back."

Bethany Sleight, 2, was refusing to let go of her father, Sergeant Tim Sleight, 33, also an engineer. Speechless and grinning, she clung to his neck as he hugged his wife Jo, 29, and son Sam, four.

The squadron flew 28 sorties over Iraq during Desert Fox, with 75 per cent accuracy. The crew now have just over two weeks' leave before returning to duties at Lossiemouth and possibly active service in Iraq.

Wing Commander Barnes, who flew three sorties, praised his team, many of whom had not been shot at before and were very nervous. "We all felt an enormous sense of responsibility. We could not afford to lose anyone.

"All the world's press was watching over this mission. We could not accept any civilian damage. That was a very real concern for us."

Combat was frightening, he said. "It's a mixture of fear and adrenalin and not an experience you enjoy."

One pilot, who cannot be named for security reasons, said flying over Iraq with anti-aircraft missiles exploding around his Tornado was terrifying. "It was my first active combat, something I have trained for for nine years. It was quite surreal. You could see what looked like fireworks flashing outside but could hear nothing and then they would explode. The first time it happened it took my breath away for a few minutes."

Flying Officer Kate Ansell, 23, from Bristol, a navigation intelligence specialist, told how after briefing one air crew about their mission, she was handed letters by three men to give to loved ones if they failed to return. "It was a huge relief to count them all back safely," she said.

Personnel celebrated Christmas with an *It's A Knockout* competition at the base, but one navigator said it was "pretty miserable". He added that, after returning from missions, the adrenalin was rushing and "all we wanted was a few beers. Instead we had to make do with some cheesy television and a book. I can't wait to hit the town tonight."

Mr Robertson paid tribute to the "invaluable and decisive part" played by the squadron in "their accurate and precise attacks against Saddam Hussein's war machine". That was the only language the dictator understood. His ability to threaten his neighbours had been curtailed.

He added: "Britain is proud of these forces who risked their lives to uphold international law and order and ensure the safety of the Gulf region."

Tony Blair is expected to visit the Lossiemouth base later this month. The British presence in the Gulf is being maintained by two squadrons from RAF Marham in Norfolk, which will continue Operation Southern Watch over the Iraqi no-fly zone.

PETER JOLLY



An RAF serviceman is greeted by his family at Lossiemouth yesterday. The 150 personnel returning from Kuwait had not seen relatives for two months

NEWS IN BRIEF

Dome link workers accused

Electricians working on the £2.85 billion Jubilee Line Underground extension between Central London and the Millennium Dome were accused of holding London Transport to ransom yesterday by demanding £5,000 bonuses to finish the project by October. The 500 electricians stand to gain up to £3 million if their demands are met by the project contractor Drake & Scull. Protracted talks between the two sides have led to claims of poor productivity by the electricians, who earn up to £1,150 a week.

Bank debugs

The Royal Bank of Scotland is to close its 1,500 cash machines on Sunday, from early morning for at least 10 hours, to install computer software that will combat any potential problems caused by the millennium bug.

Murder charge

Ibrahim Aderdour, 40, is to appear in court today, charged with the murder of his wife, Sophie, 31, their 16-month-old daughter and in-laws John Trant, 71, and his wife, Vivien, 57, who were stabbed to death in the Aderdours' North London home in October 1995.

Labour drive

The Labour Party is to seek recruits through direct mail, door drops, telephone calls and television and Internet marketing. The campaign, by an agency, will try to reverse a membership decline from 405,000 in 1997 to 392,000.

Mistaken identity

Supermarket staff were sceptical when a 6ft man handed over a credit card in the name of Mr Chi Chiu Lau. Allan Office, 45, of Sunderland, was put on 12 months' probation by South Tyneside magistrates for receiving stolen goods.

Cathedral enters the holy day market

By Ruth Gledhill
Religion Correspondent

SALISBURY Cathedral is entering the holiday market with themed "heritage" breaks featuring tours to historic sites and visits to services.

The three-day breaks, which start from £169, will include a summer solstice champagne breakfast, when tourists will be able to watch the sun rise from the top of the cathedral tower.

A candlelit Mass at the Wiltshire cathedral is also on offer under the proposals, which are an attempt to make extra money during the tourist low season.

Barry Mason, head of visitor services, said: "The breaks are all about getting people into the cathedral and into Salisbury in off-peak times.

"At the moment tour companies bring visitors to the city and the cathedral for just a quick tour. We want to keep them here for longer.

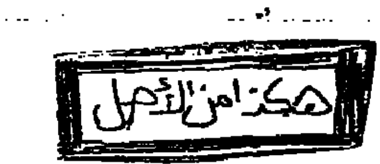
"I think we have gone about it in the right way. We have already had a great response, with about half the places taken.

"The cathedral is seeing a new era of fighting for tourist money and we are trying to react to the shifting demands of holidaymakers."

The cathedral's voluntary and professional blue-badge guides will conduct tourists round during the breaks, which are titled *Salisbury Authors and Artists*, *Castles, Cathedrals and Commoners*, and *Easter in Salisbury*.

A Tale of Two Cities will feature visits to the nearby cathedral city of Winchester, in Hampshire.

Mr Mason said: "We are recognising more and more that people don't want to do just one thing, but are interested in different permutations. So we are looking at all sorts of partnerships to explore all sorts of ideas."



Mandelson and his little local difficulty

Dominic Kennedy reports on an alleged vendetta against MP's former agent, and a trial dropped at the last minute

PETER MANDELSON changed his written evidence to give a fuller account of a London meeting with Bernard Carr, his former Hartlepool agent, before Mr Carr's fraud trial collapsed costing £100,000 and provoking new police inquiries.

Mr Mandelson, then Minister without Portfolio, was so keen to avoid having to give evidence in person that he incurred considerable cost in employing a solicitor.

The disclosure came as it emerged that Mr Mandelson has since discussed the collapse of the case with the Attorney-General, the Home Office and Cleveland Police.

Mr Carr's aborted fraud case has left a legacy of bitterness, suspicion and blame in Hartlepool, the constituency where Mr Mandelson returned to public duty yesterday for the first time since resigning as Trade and Industry Secretary on December 23.

The last thing Mr Mandelson needs as he tries to plan his return to mainstream politics is trouble on a second front. But what appeared to be a little local difficulty involving a friend with whom he stayed during the early days of his candidacy in the town is threatening to become another source of discomfort.

The case against Mr Carr, the MP's election agent in 1992, who was accused of fiddling council expenses, was eagerly awaited because of the likely prospect that Mr Mandelson would be called as a witness. But minutes before the case was due to start at Teesside Crown Court last year it was dropped by the Crown Prosecution Service. The controversy, however, has failed to die. The Carr affair has already been blamed for a backlash against Labour in Hartlepool where the council suffered huge losses in last May's elections.

Intrigue grew this weekend when Richard Brunstrom, the Assistant Chief Constable of Cleveland, issued a highly unusual statement saying: "Police inquiries arising from the collapse of the trial in February 1998 have not been completed. It is a complicated situation which merits careful and measured consideration."

Mr Carr also had a charge of gross indecency in a public lavatory dropped by Hartlepool Magistrates at the request of the Crown Prosecution Service in December 1997. After the collapse of the trial Mr Mandelson angrily criticised police incompetence.

In police circles there is resentment that Mr Mandelson changed his written evidence a month before the fraud case came to court. He apparently wanted to make clear that Mr Carr did discuss housing matters — not just Labour Party business — during a meeting in London for which the councillor, then Hartlepool's borough housing chairman, claimed expenses.

Mr Mandelson's supporters insist that the MP gave a full account during his hour-long interview with detectives but that the witness statement he signed, written by the police officers, may well have excluded some matters because it was only a one-page summary.



Carr: several unhappy events

The pressure on police to act will grow after Bill Iseley, Hartlepool Council's former Labour chief whip, said yesterday that it was known at a local government conference in Scarborough the weekend before the trial that the case might collapse. "I did hear from somebody that they had heard that the thing might collapse," Mr Iseley said.

Mr Mandelson's supporters say that people became confused because they knew the MP was not needed to give evidence and through Chinese whispers this changed to an assumption that the case was being dropped. Mr Iseley, though says he did expect that Mr Mandelson would be in court.

Mr Carr was charged with deception after a colourful escapade when the bachelor visited London in August 1996 to compete in *The Daily Telegraph's* worst cook competition. He came third with a stomach-churning recipe of turnip and fish soup with fishfinger croutons.

Unfortunately, another councillor spotted the report in the newspaper and, since the finalists enjoyed an all-expenses-paid trip to London, queried why he claimed £150 expenses from the council.

Mr Carr repaid the money but the fraud squad was called in and he was charged with seven counts of deception totalling £666 and one of attempted deception, despite making strenuous denials during long police interviews.

Mr Carr justified claiming expenses by saying that while in the capital he saw Mr Mandelson to discuss issues relating to his duties as housing chairman.

The fraud squad travelled to London to interview Mr Mandelson and the MP signed a statement of about five paragraphs summing up his evidence. Mr Mandelson was then given warning that he would be called as a witness in the fraud trial, which would be bound to attract media attention at a time when he was correctly being tipped for promotion to the Cabinet.

Mr Mandelson spent the weeks before the trial asking why he was wanted, being asked about a matter on which he insisted he knew nothing. Mr Carr's defence team, though, wanted to cross-examine Mr Mandelson about the police statements he had signed which, according to a police source suggested their London meeting had been about Labour Party matters.

About a month before the trial date, Mr Mandelson swore an expanded written version of the events. This made clear that Mr Carr came to talk about an election hearing in Hartlepool, but crucially that they also talked about dilapidated houses that Mr Mandelson wanted the council to act on.

During of flurry of activity the Friday before the trial was due to start, the defence confirmed they accepted his affidavit and he was formally told, to his relief, that he needed no longer give evidence in person.

The same day, the defence told the prosecution that they had new evidence that seemed to blow a hole in the case against Mr Carr: that the expense procedures at Hartlepool Council differed from those described in key prosecution witness statements by council chiefs.

Minutes before the trial was due to begin Jeremy Richardson, the prosecution barrister, interviewed Brian Hanson, the long-serving council leader, and John Walton, the respected and experienced finance officer, about expenses procedures. The CPS then decided to drop the charges, claiming answers received that morning directly contradicted earlier evidence from the council, seriously weakening its criminal case against Mr Carr. Both council chiefs strongly deny that they ever changed their evidence.

CPS sources maintain that the dropping of the case had nothing to do with the second version of Mr Mandelson's evidence.

Some people in Hartlepool feel there was a vendetta against Mr Carr and that the deception charges, the alerting of the police to the "cottaging" incident and a rent row which led to a repossession order on his flat are evidence that enemies were trying to destroy his bid to leave the council.

There is even suspicion as to whether the police are making more inquiries. Mr Mandelson's supporters believe the police are creating a smokescreen to draw attention from their alleged bungling of the case.

Leading article, page 23

Peter Mandelson at Clydesdale Forge Company yesterday on his first constituency visit since resigning

Heartfelt return of prodigal son

By Dominic Kennedy

PETER MANDELSON returned to his main job yesterday, tending to his constituents of Hartlepool, and said that he was glad to be back in a place where you knew who your friends were.

"It's nice to be back among people who know me and take me for what I am, who support me and keep telling me to smile and keep my chin up," he said. "It's a great town this, with no-nonsense attitudes. People are not carried away by media hype one way or the other. They take a very sensible, sober view of the world.

"That's why, when you tumble out of the fast political world of London, it always seems much safer and more secure in Hartlepool, where you know who your friends are."

Mr Mandelson spent the day listening to the woes of constituents at his regular surgery, and meeting captains of what is left of Hartlepool's industry. The fallen Trade Secretary, who was on the guest list for the Prince of Wales's 50th birthday party at Highgrove, is filling his diary with less exotic invitations.

Yesterday, touring a metal works in Hartlepool run by Caparo, the steel group owned by the Labour peer Lord Paul, he was invited to the opening of a new Russian forging press. Far from feeling like a Cinderella, Mr Mandleson looked relieved to be back in the town, where he has been treated like a favourite, if prodigal, son.

Steve Wallace, his agent, said that they had been continually stopped and welcomed. "It's a very canny town: once they decide you are one of our own, they will support you."

IRA warns of frustration

By Martin Fletcher, Chief Ireland Correspondent

THE IRA issued a new year statement yesterday that gave a warning of "growing frustration" within the republican movement. It accused Unionist leaders of resurrecting the same preconditions that caused the collapse of its last ceasefire in 1996.

The statement was condemned by Unionists, who accused the IRA of threatening a return to violence unless Unionists dropped their demand that the republicans begin disarming before Sinn Fein can be admitted to Northern Ireland's new Assembly in the spring.

Michael McGimpsey, a leading Ulster Unionist Party assemblyman, said that the IRA was attempting to blackmail Unionists. Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, called the statement a blatant threat. Billy Hutchinson, of the Progressive Unionist Party, said the peace process could yet implode if the decommissioning issue was not surmounted.

The IRA's statement, published in the republican newspaper *An Phoblacht*, said that nine months after the accord, Unionists were doing their best to prevent it being implemented because they remained "wedded to the politics of domination and inequality".

☐ A loyalist paramilitary sentenced to a total of 400 years in prison was released from the Maze yesterday after serving ten years. Denis McLean, of the Ulster Volunteer Force, was convicted of 44 offences including three murders, six attempted murders and the manslaughter of a policewoman.

New school tables to show where cash goes

Education authorities must account for spending, writes **Roland Watson**

PARENTS will be able to compare how local education authorities divide their cash between the classroom and administration in new league tables designed to ensure that more money is spent on pupils.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, will announce the initiative today in a speech aimed at spearheading the Government's new year programme.

He will also outline new rules giving school inspectors the power to put specific responsibilities out to tender if authorities are found to be failing. It could lead to private firms, charities or neighbouring authorities taking over responsibility for literacy and numeracy teaching, strategies to improve failing schools, or help for socially excluded children.

The details will come as Mr Blunkett becomes the first senior Cabinet minister to attempt to drag the focus away from the fallout of the Mandelson home-loan affair and on to policy issues. He will also attempt to quash the impression that the departure of new Labour's leading moderniser from the Cabinet has opened the way for a return to more traditional Labour values, a mood fuelled by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr Blunkett will tell the North of England Education Conference that modernisation is the only way to achieve traditional Labour aspirations such as greater equality, a better education and health service and reduced crime.

He will call for a "bold and radical" approach to delivering the reform and innovation needed on the brink of the millennium, including more use of money from the private sector in schools and transport.

"It means taking decisive action where public services are not delivering, whether we are talking about LEAs, schools, hospitals or welfare provision," he will say.

Hackney, in East London, may provide the first opportunity. An "improvement team" is already in place, but continuing friction between the council leadership and a new chief education officer has led to speculation that the authority will fail a second inspection soon.

Blunkett: new league tables initiative

Mr Blunkett's speech, to local education authority leaders in the North of England, has been recast to include a modernising message for those Labour MPs and ministers minded to exploit Mr Mandelson's demise as a way of redirecting the Government.

Speeches by other Cabinet heavyweights will follow. Mr Prescott, Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, will all reinforce the message that the Government will maintain its election promise to govern as new Labour.

The league tables to be announced by Mr Blunkett will give for the first time a comparison of how authorities divide their budgets between administering and delivering services.

Although they will take into account the differing demands of different areas, Mr Blunkett wants to show up those authorities with inflated administration bills as a way of pressuring them to put more into classrooms. He will say: "We cannot afford to let children down."

Education, pages 34-37



Pinochet: awaits ruling

US review may bring Pinochet to trial

By A Correspondent

THE American Justice Department said yesterday that it was investigating General Augusto Pinochet to see whether the former Chilean dictator could be tried in the United States.

Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, said that her department's investigation of a fatal car bombing in Washington in 1976 had not been closed. The bombing killed Orlando Letelier, the former Chilean Ambassador and a prominent Pinochet critic, and his colleague, Ronni Moffitt, an American citizen. When asked if General Pinochet, 83, could ever be brought to trial in the United States, Ms Reno replied: "That's what we have under review."

A Chilean intelligence operative, Michael Townley, was convicted in the case. Moffitt's relatives have been pressing for a prosecution of General Pinochet, but the United States has so far remained cautious about becoming involved in the legal wrangle over his status in Britain, where he has been held since October 16 pending a decision on whether he can be extradicted to Spain on human rights charges.

Football chief is accused of arson

By Russell Jenkins

A WEALTHY businessman who controlled Doncaster Rovers hired a former soldier to burn down the football club's main stand, a court was told yesterday. Ken Richardson, who described himself as the club's benefactor, was said to have been linked to a mobile telephone apparently discarded by the arsonists amid the charred wreckage at the Belle Vue ground.

The find led to the arrest of Alan Kristiansen, a private investigator, who told police that he had been hired by Mr Richardson, a shareholder at the club and heavily involved in its management.

Mr Richardson, 60, made his fortune in the waste-paper business who lives on the Isle of Man. When questioned by police, he suggested that the blaze could have been the work of one of his enemies. He denies conspiracy to commit arson.

Roger Keen, QC, for the prosecution, said that investigation into the fire on June 29, 1995, showed that someone had splashed petrol and then set fire to it. The arsonists left behind four empty fuel cans, a rucksack and a mobile phone. Kristiansen has admitted his part in the offence and is the principal witness against Mr Richardson, Sheffield Crown Court was told.

Mr Keen said that for some time Mr Richardson had been heavily involved in the club's affairs. Mr Keen said that Mr Richardson's motive might remain secret but he suggested that the ground was an area of growing revenue potential. "It may emerge that the motive was a financial one," he said.

The trial continues.

Families asked to wash patients

By Helen Johnstone

PATIENTS' relatives and friends have been asked by a hospital trust to help to feed, wash and shave them because of a shortage of nurses.

Notices are being handed to visitors at Queen Alexandra Hospital and St Mary's Hospital in Portsmouth, Hampshire, asking for volunteers. Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust runs the two acute hospitals, with 1,100 beds, and has some 20 nursing vacancies.

Surgeons are assisting doctors in medical wards who are struggling to cope: both hospitals have been overwhelmed with people suffering respiratory, heart and urinary problems.

The Department of Health said that an unusually high demand for medical beds in Portsmouth had prompted the trust to seek volunteers for non-clinical tasks so that nurses could provide medical care. A spokesman said: "As long as the relatives are happy and it is not compromising patient care, it is acceptable."

Doug Dann, of Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Community Health Council, said that pressure on hospital staff this winter was the worst he could recall. He thought the request for help was reasonable. The trust said yesterday it had had a positive response from most of the people involved.

Fast boat beats racing cars, says Mansell

Ex-Formula One world champion pays £1.3m for ocean-going luxury yacht, reports Adam Sherwin

NIGEL MANSELL has swapped racing cars for the "motor yacht of the millennium" — and says he gets more satisfaction out of boating than Formula One.

The former world champion driver has paid £1.3 million for a 74ft vessel, the most expensive on display at the 45th London International Boat Show, which opens at Earls Court in London today.

Mansell intends to take the Manhattan 74, which sleeps eight in complete comfort, on a voyage around the world, which could last for a year. "I need to spend more time on the water because I suffer in the cold," he said.

"I already have a 34ft boat, but that's a day boat. You can live full-time on this boat — it's bigger than five houses."

The Manhattan 74 is produced by Sunseeker International, a British company based in Dorset. The vessel contains all home comforts for life on the high seas; the port side houses an elevated dining area that seats eight and, below decks, a master stateroom has a queen-size bed, sofa and an ensuite shower with bidet.

Two twin guest cabins lead off from the guest stateroom, while the crew cabin contains two berths with wardrobe and vanity unit. The company has orders for 100 of the boats.

Mansell will use the vessel to explore sunnier climes. He said: "We will moor it at Fort Lauderdale, Miami, and take it for a cruise around the Bahamas. At other times we might dock it near La Manga in Spain."

Mansell's boat took three months to build and possesses the latest design in hydrodynamic hulls. The manufacturers claim a maximum speed of 35 knots, but Mansell thinks he can squeeze some more out of his new vessel.

He said: "I think it will go up to 40 knots and that will be a sensational feeling. I get more satisfaction out of boating than motor racing.

"In Formula One there are a lot of highs and lows, but with boats the feeling is always pleasurable." His dream is to take his boat on a round-the-world adventure. He said: "I have suggested to Robert Braithwaite, the chairman of Sunseeker, that we go on a round-the-world trip.

"It would take a whole year. I couldn't do it just with sails, like Tony Bullimore — we need motor power."

Although smitten by the high seas, Mansell has not ruled out a return to Formula One. He said: "People say I have retired, but, since I left Formula One, I have won two world titles. I will wait and see whether I will get back in a car."

The boat show was opened yesterday by Nick Berry, the actor who plays a harbour guard in a new BBC drama series *Harbour Lights*. The show, which runs until January 17, features 1,000 boats and is expected to generate more than £65 million worth of business.

□A second attempt by Tony Bullimore to sail single-handed around the world is being threatened by a lack of funds. His first attempt ended with him left adrift for five days.

But "Bulldog" Bullimore, as he was dubbed after his exploits, is having trouble persuading businesses that his next attempt, planned for November 2000, will prove more successful. Speaking at the boat show yesterday, he said: "I am still looking for sponsorship, but I have no doubts that I will succeed in the challenge this time. I compare myself to Niki Lauda, the racing driver who was written off when he was seriously injured. He came back to win the world title."

Bullimore has even reconciled his wife to his next voyage. He said: "She is fine about it. My wife is a very plucky person. She knows sailing can be a reckless sport, but she has confidence in me."

He intends to compete in the Vendée Globe Challenge in a 60ft monohull. The race will begin from the Vendée coast of western France and crosses the globe from east to west. Bullimore believes he can complete the journey in 100 days.

Industry buoyant, page 31

PETER JORDAN

Pole position: Nigel Mansell in front of the Manhattan 74 yacht at the London International Boat Show yesterday. He wants to sail around the world

The interior of the yacht, which sleeps eight comfortably

Times issues challenge to circle globe

By Edward Gorman, sailing correspondent

THE call went out on the opening day of the London International Boat Show for the towns and cities of Britain to take up the challenge of racing each other around the world in *The Times* Clipper 2000 race.

The race, for paying amateurs sailing in identical 60ft yachts named after sponsoring towns and cities, sets off in October 2000. It is organised by the yachtsman Sir Robin Knox-Johnston and sponsored by *The Times*.

After leaving the South Coast, contestants will sail round the middle latitudes of the world by way of more than 12 ports, including stops at Hawaii, Japan, China, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Africa and the United States.

The unique feature of the race, in which crews will compete for *The Times* Trophy over six legs, is the chance it offers for towns and cities to compete against each other. Speaking at the Boat Show yesterday, Sir Robin compared the concept with league football: "An awful lot of people get behind their team and, if it does well, it is good for the town and good for the city. We thought why not take this concept a stage further and have cities competing around the world using a yacht for the millennium."

John Bryant, Deputy Editor of *The Times*, said: "An awful lot of people are looking around for something significant to do to mark the millennium and we know that many people harbour in their hearts this dream to sail around the world. The combination of the Clipper race and the millennium will be irresistible."

To sponsor and secure the name of a boat, cities or towns must pay a fee of £100,000. That sum could come from various sources, including private business or individuals, perhaps working in conjunction with the local chamber of commerce. The fee also buys a package of promotional opportunities for the sponsoring city, including one free berth for each of the six legs and corporate entertaining days before and during the race.

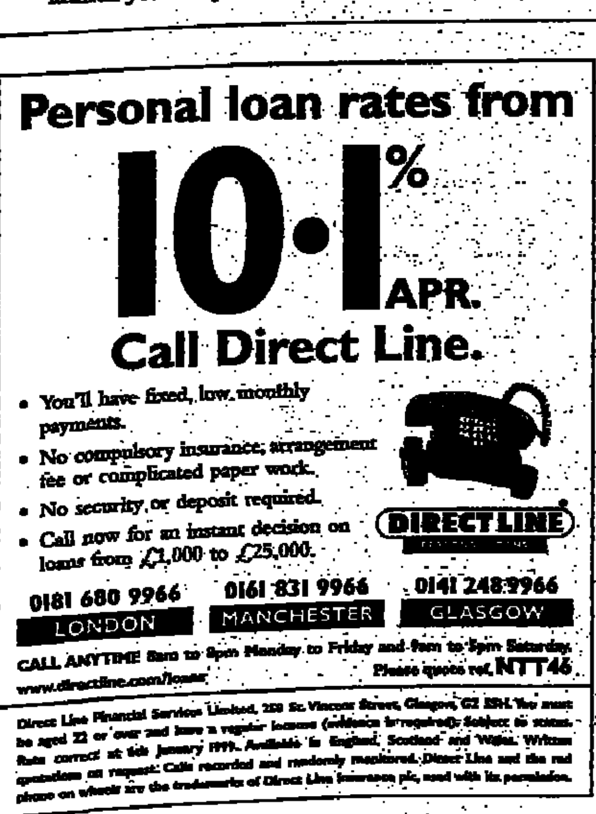
Sir Robin emphasised that sailing experience was not required, since thorough pre-race training would be offered as part of a package.

Up to 12 boats will compete in the 34,000-mile race, which will take ten months to circumnavigate the globe. Each boat will be led by a professional skipper and the organisers are hoping that a core crew of five will complete the whole race on each boat, with another 14 crew members participating in either one, two or three legs of the race.

For information on *The Times* Clipper 2000 race please telephone 01234 711550 or see the Clipper Ventures website at www.clipper-ventures.com


The Times clipper at the launch yesterday





GEOGRAPHERS' CONFERENCE

Racist Scots in US 'have links to SNP'

Academic says right-wing groups believe in pure white Caledonian culture, reports Nigel Hawkes

SCOTTISH societies in the United States with extreme views about a pure white Caledonian culture are forging links with the Scottish National Party, a conference was told yesterday.

Euan Hague, of Staffordshire University, said the politics of the societies tended towards the right, making them *strange bedfellows with the* left-leaning SNP.

There are more than 200 US organisations that proclaim Scottish heritage and organise Highland Games, complete with caber-tossing. In 1969 only 20 Highland Games were held in the United States.

Dr Hague told the Royal Geographic Society — Institute of British Geographers conference at Leicester University: "They glorify the kilt, haggis, tartan, the lot. They see Scottishness as a pure white culture where the men are strong and the women dance." He believes that their growth is a reaction to changes in American life that have threatened white supremacy.

Last year the US Senate, encouraged by Trent Lott, its Republican leader, unanimously passed a resolution designating April 6 as National Tartan Day — the day in 1320 when the Declaration of Arbroath was signed by Scottish nobles pledging to fight for their freedom.

The US groups Dr Hague has contacted support Scottish independence and blame the English for swamping "the pure Celtic spirituality" of the Scots. The creation of this romantic Scottishness, far removed from the realities of modern Scotland, "raise questions about who has the power to define a nation and its culture", he said.

Dr Hague said he went to one Celtic gathering in New York attended by 10,000 people and saw nothing but white faces. "There are plenty of black Scots today, and the SNP tries to include them. That isn't the impression I have of the Scottish groups in the US."

Dr Hague, who studied the marketing of Scottishness when reading for his PhD at Syracuse University in New York, sees a parallel between previous SNP fundraising in the US and that carried out by Sinn Fein. "The SNP's blithe acceptance of contributions from the US groups worries me," he said. "They should be more careful where their funds are coming from."

A spokesman for the SNP said the party had a network of co-ordinators in the US but had never received more than £2,000 in any one year from these sources. The Nationalists say their main efforts in the States are now aimed at influencing opinion formers.

The spokesman added that the party would abide fully with the Neill committee recommendations on party funding, which include a ban on overseas donations from anyone other than UK nationals.

The SNP will also publish details of every donation it receives this year, but will not disclose details of donations retrospectively.



JOHN PAUL

Scottish societies in the US organise Highland Games, including tossing the caber

Huge reserves of gas will fuel 21st century

BY NIGEL HAWKES
SCIENCE EDITOR

GAS would fuel the 21st century to the same extent that coal fuelled the 19th and oil the 20th, an energy specialist told the conference.

The world's known reserves of gas would last for 70 years, he said, and new reserves were continually being found. Peter Odell said that the main future sources of gas would be Russia (which has 40 per cent of known reserves), Iran (30 per cent), Algeria, Libya and Egypt. Importantly, he said, gas produced only half the amount of global warming gases as coal.

Professor Odell, who for 15 years directed energy studies at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, based his talk on studies he has undertaken for the International Atomic Energy Agency. His conclusions offer little comfort to the nuclear power industry, as they indicate no real need for non-fossil fuels before the middle of next century.

Gas reserves, he said, had been consistently underestimated in the past and, by the middle of the 21st century, gas would have overtaken oil as a global energy source. The use of coal, he said, would continue to decline, with many reserves left unmined because of environmental objections.

Dr Odell said that only after the year 2060, by which time 80 per cent of the world's energy supplies would have been used, would the renewable sources of energy become a high priority. Around that date — a much later one than than most governments have assumed — there might be a second chance for nuclear power, if other renewable sources have not been successfully developed.

Gas, he said, might last even longer if new technology enabled its extraction from gas hydrates — frozen sources of methane found at the bottom of the oceans — which are believed to contain 30 times as much as conventional reserves.

Organic farming takes root in South

BY OUR SCIENCE EDITOR

ORGANIC farming has found its most fertile soil in a belt of southern counties.

Three factors have helped the concept to flourish there, the conference was told. Farmers in the South cannot compete with East Anglia's vast cereal production; there is a receptive market for the belief that organic food is better; and consumers can afford to pay for it.

The organic heartland runs down central southern England and along the South Coast, according to Brian Ilbery, of Coventry University. Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Oxfordshire and Berkshire form the "organic core" for the new wave of farmers. A second concentration exists in Kent and Sussex.

Dr Ilbery's studies show that the organic farming movement, once dotted almost randomly across the map, is settling into areas that combine the right combination of incentive and opportunity. The concentration occurred during the 1990s, a period of experimentation in which many entered organic farming — and many left.

These counties were not core cereal-growing areas and found it hard to compete with the large, open farms of East Anglia in wheat and barley, Dr Ilbery said.

By 1996 there were 601 organic farms in England and Wales, with ten counties accounting for more than half of them, he said. Hereford and Worcester, which at that time was one county, had 54 such farms, the greatest number. But the largest increases were in Wiltshire, which had added 11 organic farms since 1993, and Gloucestershire, which added 24. Over the same period, Essex lost 11.

"There is a high turnover of organic farms," Dr Ilbery said. "Half of those which were organic in 1990 had gone by 1997. But others had come in to take their place. Organic farming is taking off, and large-scale arable farms are now converting."

Couple and daughter killed in house fire

Lghted candle on a television set i: thought to have caused blaze hours after a 21st birthday party

A COUPLE and their daughter died early yesterday when fire swept through the family home hours after a 21st birthday party.

Firefighters found the bodies of Brian Boyle, 50, his wife, Briege 48, and their daughter Sasha 28, when they broke into the house in the village of Rostrevor, Co Down. A second daughter, Marie, a model, whose 21st birthday party had ended just hours earlier, escaped through a skylight and was rescued by neighbours, who raised the alarm.

Firefighters carried another woman aged 41, out of the burning house. She was taken to hospital with smoke inhalation. Two firemen also needed hospital treatment.

It was not known what started the fire, which broke out in the living room of the semi-detached bungalow at Rosswood Park, on the outskirts of the village. However, police are believed to be investigating the possibility that it may have been caused by a lighted candle on top of a television.

The fire is believed to have started about two hours after the last of the guests, including Marie's grandparents, had left the house. It quickly spread towards the front door, trapping her parents in an upstairs bedroom and others on the ground floor.

Firemen from neighbouring Warrenpoint used breathing apparatus as they twice battled through the flames to reach the victims. The living room was well alight by the time they arrived. Marie had to be restrained from going back into the house.

The 41-year-old woman rescued from the house was taken to Daisy Hill Hospital, in Newry, where she was being treated in the high dependency unit. A spokesman said she was in a serious but stable condition.

Ciaran Fearon, who lives opposite the Boyles' house, said: "I was woken by the Boyles' next-door neighbours, who had spotted smoke coming out of the living room. My wife phoned the fire brigade.

"Myself and some of the other neighbours then went round the back of the house, banging on the doors and windows to try and rouse them. Marie made it out of the skylight window and we managed to coax her off the roof by pulling a wheelie bin over for her to climb down on to.



Marie Boyle: escaped through a skylight

"Marie told us her mum and dad were still in the other upstairs bedroom, but we didn't know her sister or anybody else was in the house at the time. I managed to scramble on to the roof and shouted through the skylight window, but the heat and smoke were intense and I had to come down," Mr Fearon said.

Another neighbour, Kieran Killen, said: "We got a couple of garden hoses and trained them at the windows, but then the whole place just seemed to combust and go up in flames."

John Smyth, a fire station officer, said that the fire was one of the most horrific incidents he had seen. "The ground floor was an inferno. My officers were just going into a wall of flame."

Firefighters, who received the emergency call at 4.20am, carried four people out of the house within minutes, and searched the building twice, he said. However, three of the four were already dead.

"It was obvious there had been a party — the cake was still in the kitchen," Mr Smyth said. "It was a heartbreaking scene. It's the first tragedy of this type in the area for some time and for several of my officers it was the first time they had had to deal with fatalities."

Mr Boyle was said to have been a popular member of Warrenpoint golf club, where the flag flew at half-mast yesterday to mark the tragedy, which has deeply shocked the tight-knit community.

Tony Williamson, an independent councillor and family friend, said that Mrs Boyle suffered a double bereavement just before Christmas, when her two brothers died within a short time of each other. "They were a lovely family, very well known in the area," Mr Williamson said.

Brian and Briege Boyle, who died in the fire with their daughter Sasha

Teacher who hit love rival goes free

By Joanna Bale

A TEACHER who attacked his wife's lover with a metal pipe walked free from court yesterday after he was found guilty of wounding.

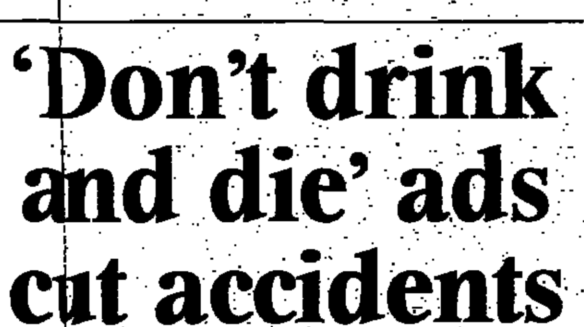
Alistair McColl, 37, a craft and design teacher, broke down at Norwich Crown Court when he was told that he would not be jailed.

Judge David Mellor imposed a 12-month conditional discharge on McColl, saying harsher punishment would serve no useful purpose.

The court was told how McColl was devastated when he learnt in May that his wife Cherie, 38, and Colin Breeze, who both teach at Westbourne High School, in Ipswich, were having an affair.

Two weeks after hearing that his wife was probably going to leave and take their two young children, McColl, from Ipswich, drove Mr Breeze to isolated woodland and hit him twice over the head with a length of steel tubing. Mr Breeze needed stitches.

McColl, who is suspended from *Copleston High School*, Ipswich, denied intending to cause him serious harm. He was cleared of the more serious charge of wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. Earlier he had been cleared of attempted murder after the judge ruled that there was insufficient evidence.



'Don't drink and die' ads cut accidents

By Stewart Tendler, Crime Correspondent

THE £million Christmas campaign against drink-driving cut the number of motorists testing positive by 22 per cent and reduced accidents by 5 per cent, police said yesterday.

Figures for the 43 forces in England and Wales show that the falls took place despite a rise in the number of tests. Police believe the "Don't Drink and Die" campaign hit home with the target group of male drivers in their early 20s.

Yesterday the Association of Chief Police Officers issued figures for December 18 to January 2 showing that there were 16,795 breathalyser tests after collisions, compared with 15,455 last year. The number of other accidents fell from 6,881 to 6,444.

Drivers were positive in 1,081 cases, 6 per cent of tests. In 1997-98 there were 1,430 positive tests representing 9 per cent of samples taken.

The success of the Christmas campaign means that the peak for drink-driving and accidents is now mid-year. Yesterday police and government officials said that a new campaign may be targeted at the summer holiday period. Chief constables also remain convinced of the need for a cut in the drink-driving limit.

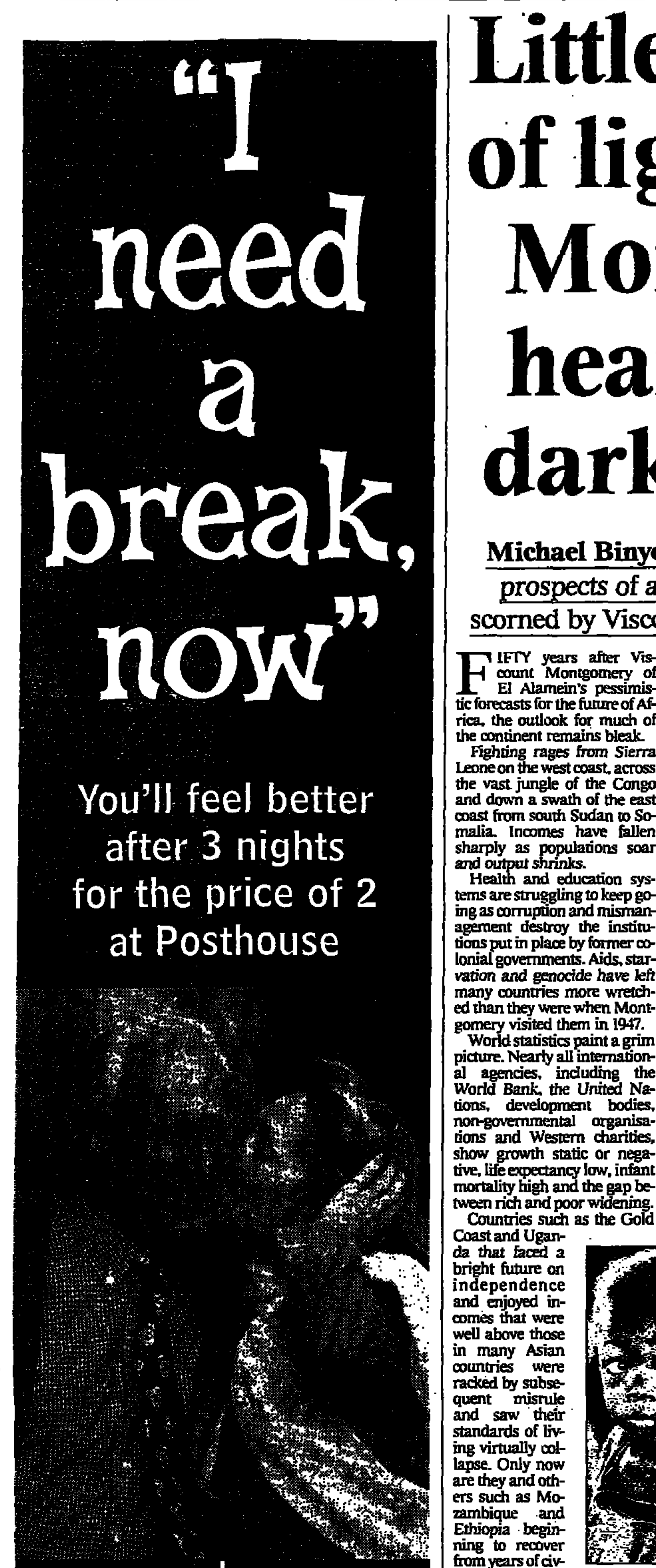
The figures do not include the total number of tests carried out over the Christmas period. Forces adopted different policies, with some chief constables ordering widespread testing while others limited the tests to the scenes of accidents or cases where police suspected an offence.

Announcing the figures Ken Williams, Chief Constable of Norfolk and a senior spokesman for the association, said he thought the campaign had been more powerful than other years. It had helped to reach a hardcore of young drivers in their early 20s. But the police were still concerned at motorists in their 50s who continue to believe they can drink and drive safely. The number of deaths on the road because of drink has stayed at about 540 since 1992 and Mr Williams said more needed to be done to cut this.

He said police wanted to reduce the the legal blood alcohol limit from 80mg alcohol in 100ml of blood to 50mg and they awaited a decision from the Government. Mr Williams said seven European countries had moved to 50mg and Spain was about to join them. He said British police did not support a zero level as this was difficult to test because the body could produce small amounts of alcohol naturally.

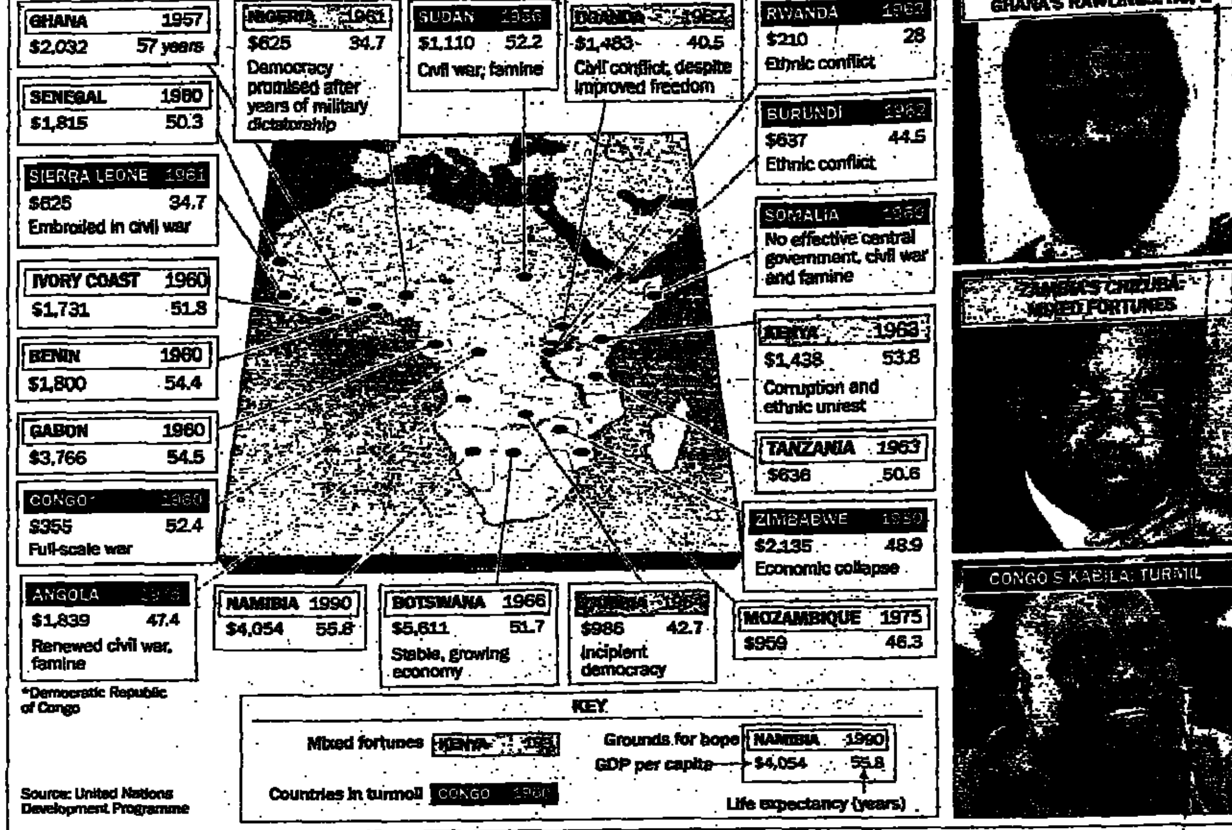
Leading article, page 23





Little sign of light in Monty's heart of darkness

Michael Binyon examines the *prospects of a poor continent* scorned by Viscount Montgomery



FIFTY years after Viscount Montgomery of El Alamein's pessimistic forecasts for the future of Africa, the outlook for much of the continent remains bleak.

Fighting rages from Sierra Leone on the west coast, across the vast jungle of the Congo and down a swath of the east coast from south Sudan to Somalia. Incomes have fallen sharply as populations soar and output shrinks.

Health and education systems are struggling to keep going as corruption and mismanagement destroy the institutions put in place by former colonial governments. Aids, starvation and genocide have left many countries more wretched than they were when Montgomery visited them in 1947.

World statistics paint a grim picture. Nearly all international agencies, including the World Bank, the United Nations, development bodies, non-governmental organisations and Western charities, show growth static or negative, life expectancy low, infant mortality high and the gap between rich and poor widening.

Countries such as the Gold Coast and Uganda that faced a bright future on independence and enjoyed incomes that were well above those in many Asian countries were racked by subsequent misrule and saw their standards of living virtually collapse. Only now are they and others such as Mozambique and Ethiopia beginning to recover from years of civil war.


Face of the future: denied prosperity

Montgomery believed that the fault lay mainly with Africans who, he said, were incapable of developing their countries themselves. But in many cases it was the colonial rulers who sowed the seeds of the subsequent chaos by failing to train a properly educated cadre to run the newly independent states and then by withdrawing precipitately.

Some colonial rulers — notably the Belgians in the Congo and the Portuguese — were ruthlessly exploitative and repatriated all profits from the extraction of raw materials instead of building up local industry. When they left, they took with them many of the installations needed to run the country.

Africa has also suffered from the volatility of commodity prices. Kwame Nkrumah's Ghana was brought low by the collapse of the cacao market. Zambia's decline was accelerated by falling copper prices. Coffee gluts regularly wiped out investment plans in East Africa.

But the main impediment to growth has been political. Colonial boundaries cut across tribal and ethnic lines; the new countries' decision not to change them was understandable, but left many with minorities and feuding groups that concentrated their energies on attacking and destroying their tribal enemies.

For decades Rwanda has been terrorised by killings prompted by the enmity between Hutus and Tutsis, culminating in the genocide in 1994 in which up to a million people died; similar ethnic enmity has destabilised Burundi, also a former Belgian colony, which saw its gross domestic product drop by up to 17 per cent in some years.

Tribal instability has been exacerbated by Cold War rivalry. Somalia is a classic example. In the 1970s Soviet influence was strong, with the Soviet Navy seeking port facilities at Mogadishu. The Russians supported the regime of Siad Barre, who launched an attack on neighbouring Ethiopia, that had long been under American influence.

But with the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie and the installation of a Marxist government under Mengistu, Moscow decided to switch sides. Somalia's Ogaden offensive was thrown back. The subsequent downfall of Barre and the withdrawal of Soviet support led to the political disunity that finally resulted in anarchy and famine, prompting the American intervention in 1992.

Similar disastrous consequences of Cold War rivalry stunted the development of Angola, a mineral-rich country that has seen virtually no peace since the Portuguese left. The Russian attempt to establish a naval base prompted South African — and more discreetly, American — support for the Unita rebels.

That, in turn, led to the intervention of the Cubans. Vast quantities of arms flooded into the country, together with millions of landmines that are still taking their toll. The fighting has been going on so long that a generation knows little else and is ill-educated for the development of the country.

In some cases, the wealth generated under the previous colonial governments has led to instability. Examples are Zimbabwe and Kenya. Nairobi, a prosperous city, attracted vast numbers from the countryside, and a population boom — almost double the birthrate of India — began that far outstripped economic growth. The influx of wealthy tourists has exacerbated the visible gap between rich and poor, which in turn has led to crime, violence and a threat to general prosperity.

In Zimbabwe, the success of largely white-owned agriculture has been viewed with envy by a Government under pressure to raise general living standards. President Mugabe's attempts to confiscate white farms have had a disastrous effect on the national economy and on international investor confidence.

In several cases the biggest factor has been the criminal greed of the post-independence rulers themselves. Those countries that have seen living standards drop most quickly are those where dictators have plundered their country's wealth, enriching themselves at the expense of national development. Nigeria and the Republic of Congo, formerly Zaire, are the worst examples of rich countries brought low by kleptomaniac rulers.

The tradition of the headman looking after himself and his tribe first has served Africa ill. It has led to tribal favouritism by President Moi in Kenya, discrimination in favour of the Shona tribe in Zimbabwe by President Mugabe and the murderous oppression of Nigeria's Ogoni people and Biafrans.

There are bright spots. Countries that have maintained stability — often with financial and institutional links to former colonial rulers — have done well. In West Africa, Senegal and the Ivory Coast have been comparatively prosperous. Botswana has set such an example of institutional democracy that the Commonwealth recently held a conference there to further democracy in Africa. Tanzania has remained poor, but it has seen political stability and the voluntary retirement of its first President, Julius Nyerere.

Some institutions in Africa have remained bulwarks against falling standards. The Church has played a visible lead in the fight against disease and corruption. The judiciary in many countries continues to function even amid chaos. In Sierra Leone, where civil war threatens the capital again, the courts recently held trials of former junta members which international observers applauded as fair. The West has also been encouraged by the recent emergence of tough-minded African leaders who have rejected the previous embrace of state socialism. President Museveni of Uganda is seen as one of the most pragmatic of such new leaders.

President Melawi of Ethiopia and President Afewerki of Eritrea are similarly non-ideological pragmatists, ready to concentrate on development in friendly co-operation with the West. That does not guarantee success. Uganda is threatened by fanatics of the Lord's Day Army. Ethiopia and Eritrea recently fought a brief and bizarre desert war over boundary disputes. And the new Government in Rwanda has been drawn into the worsening civil war in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo.

PAPERS released this week at the Public Record Office at Kew reveal that Viscount Montgomery of El Alamein, left, in a secret report in 1948, dismissed the African as "a complete savage" incapable of developing the continent. He advised Clement Attlee's Government on a grand design for Africa and "master plan" for each British colony. British interests should be amalgamated into three federations, a vast reservoir of labour and minerals, he said.

But the "new" African leaders at least are determined to confront their countries' problems, allow free expression if not necessarily political parties and to re-establish good working relations with their former colonial rulers. Ghana, under Jerry Rawlings, is making an impressive return to prosperity. Today's African leaders and academics are often frank about their difficulties. Professor Ali Mazrui, a noted Kenyan political scientist, has suggested that the transition from colonial rule was too ill-prepared. He has criticised Africa's failre to set proper budgets and ɔ accept responsibility for goo government. That message as been reinforced by bodiessuch as the Commonwealth Africa has absorbed more international aid since independence than any other conrient. It also has most of theworld's poorest countries, wir Sierra Leone coming an absute bottom according to te combined indicators of :UN report.

Montgomery thouht that the continent was tɪbe Britain's postwar lardera source of cheap labour ancof limitless natural commoties. His views were shaped ba tour in the autumn of 1947hat took him to French Moroɔo, Gambia, Gold Coast, Niεria, Belgian Congo, Soul Africa, Southern Rhodesiε Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan ad Egypt. He believed that rosperity could best be encoraged by creating three hug colonial federations in Wes Central and East Africa.

His visit to the Old Coast came ten years bfore that country was the firso gain independence. Undr Nkrumah, whose extravagance, state socialism and ati-colonial posturing set the attern for future leaders, the country's wealth disappeart. Montgomery may hav foreseen such a decline; he id not see that a former cup leader would then dispelhe pessimists and show tha country once a byword for lst opportunity can recover.

Leading artie, page 23



Cape Muslims threaten Blair visit

Protesters enraged by Iraq airstrikes vow disruption while leaders strengthen ties, Sam Kiley writes

HUNDREDS of South African Muslims burnt the Union Jack outside the British High Commission in Cape Town yesterday and pledged to disrupt Tony Blair's visit to the "Mother City" after being dispersed with stun grenades and teargas.

Protesting at the American and British airstrikes against Iraq, the demonstrators waved banners and screamed "One Blair, one bullet" — an adaptation of the apartheid-era protest slogan "One settler, one bullet".

Other placards read "United States, United Kingdom, United Terrorists" and "Blair — Blood on his hands". Armoured trucks were beaten with sticks as police fired teargas and stun grenades to force the crowd away from the High Commission, which stands opposite the South African parliament where Mr Blair is due to speak today.

The group behind the demonstration, *Muslims Against Global Oppression*, allegedly took responsibility for the bombing of the Planet Hollywood restaurant in Cape Town shortly after the US air raids on Afghanistan and Sudan last year. Two people were killed and five British holidaymakers from the same family were injured in the blast.

The police said yesterday that forensic science experts had found similarities between the Planet Hollywood device and a recent car bomb which injured two people on the Cape Town Waterfront marina on New Year's Day. Members of Mr Blair's entourage will be staying there during the Prime Minister's short visit to the Cape.

"We are not taking any chances at all," a police spokesman said. "There could not be any greater security for Mr Blair's visit."

But yesterday the demonstrators were able to force their way into central Cape Town after being denied permission to march, and burn the Union Jack along with the flags of Israel and the US.

In Johannesburg, meanwhile, Mr Blair gave Thabo Mbeki, heir apparent to President Mandela, a ringing endorsement ahead of elections this year. The Prime Minister backed his belief that South Africa was on the right course with a 40 per cent boost in British aid and a pledge to support South Africa in Europe.

Mr Blair's praise for Mr Mbeki, the Deputy President, and the policies of the ANC Government, were also aimed at reassuring whites that Mr Mandela's retirement this year will not result in a black backlash and the end of the policy of reconciliation.

"Because of [Mr Mbeki] and his leadership qualities I have great confidence for the future here," Mr Blair said. Their often jocular joint press conference signalled the beginning of a special relationship amid pledges to co-operate closely on solutions to African conflicts as well as Iraq.

In recent speeches, Mr Mbeki has emphasised the vast gap in the average incomes of black and white South Africans, and given a warning of a growing "rage" among blacks that this has not been closed five years after the end of white rule.

Mr Blair announced an extra £90 million in aid to help bridge the gaps between basic services to the races. "The new Government has made huge strides since 1994. But transformation is far from complete. Britain is committed to strengthening its support for South Africa's efforts to overcome the legacy of apartheid," he said. "We have done this because we believe it is a good investment for the future."

The Prime Minister added that he thought the Government was "taking the right measures" to combat the problem of spiralling crime. Few South Africans would agree. As Mr Blair spoke, and hours before he was due to visit a women's support group in the impoverished black township of Alexandra, news of a double rape and murder was being broadcast.

Later in Alexandra, on the outskirts of Johannesburg, Mr Blair announced £2 million in financial support for programmes aimed at preventing violence against women. South Africa experiences high levels of physical and sexual abuse of women, and has the world's highest rate of reported rape.

The two leaders also discussed talks between the European Union and South Africa on a free-trade agreement. But Mr Blair was not able to persuade Mr Mbeki to sign a deal worth billions of pounds to South Africa. Agreement has been held up over Pretoria's insistence that domestically produced sherry and port should be marketed in Europe as such. European commissioners have insisted that these products must be marketed as "fortified wines" in line with EU laws.



EDDIE GRADLOW · AP

Tony Blair meets street children yesterday in the impoverished township of Alexandra, north of Johannesburg. He visits Cape Town today

Limited truce in Sierra Leone

By Michael Binyon
Diplomatic Editor

SIERRA Leone's President Kabbah and the jailed rebel leader Foday Sankoh were reported to have agreed a week-long ceasefire yesterday after a day of fighting in the country's capital, Freetown. The President said the truce would allow for talks.

Earlier, fighting raged across the capital as West African troops launched a counterattack to stem the day-old rebel advance.

Residents cowered in buildings as shooting continued between the Nigerian-led Ecomog intervention force and the Revolutionary United Front, the rebel group that has joined forces with the ousted junta and defectors from the Sierra Leone Army.

Britain yesterday accused Liberia of helping the rebels and called on President Taylor to stop direct aid. Sam Bockarie, the rebel leader, said his forces would stop fighting if Sankoh was freed. President Kabbah said that could happen within a week.

British miner dies in Angola ambush

By Sam Kiley

A BRITISH miner and three others have been killed in an ambush in Angola's diamond-rich Lunda Norte province amid speculation that the rebel Unita movement is holding up to 18 Western hostages after other attacks on mines and the shooting down of United Nations aircraft.

The Briton, Patrick Bergin, a Brazilian colleague and two Angolan guards were killed when their vehicle was ambushed about four miles from their base at Luzamba in what was believed by their employer, Ashton Mining of Australia, to be a Unita attack. Banditry is commonplace, however, in an area rich in diamonds.

The attack is the second on a mine in which Britons have been killed or abducted, allegedly by Dr Jonas Savimbi's Unita. Last month a British manager and several workers were killed, and four men including Jason Pope, 26, a British engineer, were taken hostage, in a Unita attack on a mine owned by DiamondWorks. The company had had close links to a South African company that once supplied troops for Angolan government forces fighting Unita.

Nothing has been heard of the hostages since Mr Pope contacted his employers by two-way radio. They said he was being "used as a pack animal" by the fighters to carry goods looted from the mine.

According to sources in Luanda, the Angolan capital, there is evidence that some or all of the 14 passengers on the first UN aircraft shot down just before the new year may have been captured by Unita, which used Western hostages to attract publicity for its movement during the 1980s.

Iraq inspectors were US spies

UN leak confirms Saddam's claims, writes **James Bone** in New York

AMERICAN officials, reacting to leaks from senior United Nations officials, confirmed Iraq's long-standing suspicions that US spies worked under cover as UN weapons inspectors to gather intelligence about the Iraqi regime.

Despite official denials, American sources were quoted as saying that US intelligence officers had served on UN inspection teams using diplomatic cover or other professional identities to collect information for the United States.

The UN teams are said to have installed a "black box" eavesdropping system in Iraq last year that intercepted President Saddam Hussein's presidential communications network and fed the information via US satellite to the National Security Agency.

Analysts sifted through tens of thousands of hours of intercepted conversations before relaying relevant information to the UN Special Commission (Unscom) for use by the inspectors.

The operation, known as "Shake the Tree", was designed to penetrate the "concealment mechanism" by which Iraq's intelligence agencies and elite military units hid proscribed weapons components and documents from UN inspectors. But the same security network, run by a presidential secretary who is an elder in Saddam's Tikriti clan, was also responsible for the Iraqi leader's personal security and the operation gave America insight into his movements.

US officials said that some of the intelligence was used in last month's four-day bombing campaign, which targeted the inner circle responsible for concealing Iraq's mass-destruction weapons.

Iraq crowed about the disclosures, which originally were leaked to the press by aides to Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, who feared that the United States was abusing Unscom. "We have here under the hat of the United Nations, spies and CIA people," Humam Abdul-Khaleq, Iraq's Minister of Culture and Information, said. Khalid al-Saeedi, chairman of the human rights committee of the Iraqi parliament, said the disclosures should bolster Iraq's credibility.

Senior American officials were said to be furious with Mr Annan for allowing his aides to make public a US intelligence operation that apparently is still under way. But there has been a widening divergence between Washington and the UN since the Clinton Administration announced a policy of overthrowing Saddam, a move that put it at odds with the Security Council's stated goals in Iraq.

Diplomats predicted that the confirmation of an American spying operation would only undermine Unscom and Richard Butler, its Australian head, who is under increasing pressure to resign.

Iraq defied the Western-imposed no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq again yesterday. A US F16 fighter fired on an air-defence installation in the northern zone after the pilot found that he was about to be targeted by a surface-to-air missile.


JOSE MIGUEL GOMEZ / REUTERS

Rebels keeping vigil yesterday as President Pastrana of Colombia waited to start talks with the leader of the country's largest left-wing guerrilla group on measures to end the 40-year civil war.

Colombia rebels join talks

Hundreds of international observers, human rights activists and Colombian politicians converged on San Vicente del Caguan, a remote jungle town, hoping to witness an unprecedented handshake between the recently elected Conservative Party President and Manuel Marulanda (Gabriella Gamini writes). But the legendary leader of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc) failed to emerge from his mountain hideout. The veteran guerrilla leader, who commands 15,000 armed rebels who control most of rural Colombia, has not appeared in public for 40 years. A middle-ranking rebel commander, Joaquin Gomez, spoke in his place. It was not clear last night whether the talks will succeed in moving on from the initial contact.

WORLD IN BRIEF

Patriarch exhorts Serbs to multiply

Belgrade: Patriarch Pavle, Serbia's Orthodox leader, has reminded the nation that the struggle for Kosovo, where Albanians outnumber Serbs by nine to one, will be decided as much by demographics as by bullets (Tom Walker writes). In his sermon to the nation on Wednesday night, the Orthodox Christmas Eve, he said: "Who has the most sheep in the field, that is his field." If the message had been too oblique for some, he then added: "Multiply yourselves."

The frail 85-year-old is no stranger to controversy. Two years ago he spent his Christmas standing between riot police and students demonstrating against the regime of President Milosevic. By raising the issue of Serbia's declining birth rate, he again runs the risk of falling foul of a government determined to bury the issue of the dwindling number of Serbs in the country's southern province.

Polar venture called off

Sydney: Atrocious weather conditions have forced three adventurers to abandon their quest to retrace the footsteps of the explorer, Robert Scott, 87 years after his fatal expedition to the South Pole and back, organisers said. The team, led by Peter Hillary, son of Sir Edmund Hillary, the Everest conqueror, had been tent-bound since Sunday in temperatures of -30C (-22F) and winds gusting at 30 to 50 knots. Snowdrifts of more than 6ft and visibility of just 16ft have put the team three weeks behind schedule. They will continue to the South Pole, but will then be airlifted back to Scott Base. *(AFP)*

New Cabinet in Turkey



Istanbul: Turkey is expected to emerge from six weeks of political stalemate as Bulent Ecevit, right, submits a Cabinet for approval today (Andrew Finkel writes). The Government, the sixth in the lifetime of the present parliament, seems likely to win a confidence vote next week, but is unlikely to accomplish more than to lead the country into a general and local elections planned for April 18. Mr Ecevit's Democratic Left party will lead a minority administration.

Israel seminaries 'fake'

Jerusalem: *Police are investigating claims that the Religious Affairs* Ministry has funnelled millions of pounds to fictitious seminaries. "We received information from the Finance Ministry and the police that led us to suspect that some of the religious seminaries we have been giving money to did not exist," said Shimon Malka, a spokesman. He said the seminaries' accountants were summoned "and we became suspicious when some failed to appear". The ministry's director-general, Avi Blaustein, told *Haaretz* that £10 million a year was being siphoned off. *(AFP)*

Wife shortage in China

Shanghai: The gender imbalance in China's population is worsening, according to a government think-tank, which says the male-female ratio is 120-100. According to *Business Weekly*, figures from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing indicate that one in six males — 111 million — cannot hope to find a wife. A longstanding bias in favour of male offspring has taken a harsh toll, combined with the country's one-child policy. Overseas women's groups say there has been a massive upsurge in female infanticide. China's population is over 1.22 billion. *(AFP)*

Police chief quits over Anwar attack

FROM NELSON GRAVES IN KUALA LUMPUR

MALAYSIA'S police chief resigned yesterday after taking full responsibility for injuries inflicted on Anwar Ibrahim, the former Finance Minister, while he was in police custody three months ago.

But the country's Opposition leader and a human rights group said the resignation should not stop authorities from identifying those responsible for the violence.

They want Datuk Seri Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister, to apologise for having suggested that Mr Anwar's injuries could have been self-inflicted and have asked him and the attorney-general to quit.

Abdul Rahim Noor, the Inspector-General of Police, bowed to public indignation when Mr Anwar appeared in court in September with a black eye and bruises on his neck and hands.

He said he had been beaten while in custody. The outcry grew until a statement by the attorney-general on Tuesday pinned the blame for Mr Anwar's injuries on the police.



Rahim Noor: he took full blame for jail injuries

"I, as the Inspector-General of the Royal Malaysia Police, assume full responsibility," Mr Rahim Noor said in his resignation statement.

"I have therefore taken a decision to terminate my service as the Inspector-General of Police with effect from tomorrow."

Mr Rahim Noor became the first official to resign since the Prime Minister dismissed Mr Anwar in early September, exposing a split in Malaysia's dominant political party.

It was not clear whether the police chief's departure would end the controversy over police treatment of Mr Anwar, who until his dismissal was was prime-minister-in-waiting and now is standing trial on sex and corruption charges.

Opposition leaders and rights activists have accused the attorney-general of keeping the public in the dark over Mr Anwar's injuries and called for him to step down as well.

"Public confidence would suffer another grievous blow if Malaysians and the international community are made to feel that Rahim Noor's resignation is just an excuse for a cover-up and the ending of all investigations into the police beatings of Anwar while in police custody," Lim Kit Siang, the parliamentary Opposition leader, said. The rights group Suaram said the attorney-general should resign for delaying and suppressing the report on Mr Anwar's beating.

"Suaram reiterates calls for Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad as the Home Minister to apologise publicly for misleading the Malaysian people, and to assume full responsibility by tendering his immediate resignation," it said.

The president of the Aliran rights group, P. Ramakrishnan, last night called on Dr Mahathir and the attorney-general to resign unless "those responsible for assaulting Anwar" were identified by the end of the month.

In a rare breaking of ranks, a component party in Dr Mahathir's governing coalition also criticised the delay in identifying the person or persons who injured Mr Anwar.

Dr Mahathir has said that he would consider public demands for an independent inquiry into Mr Anwar's injuries. *(Reuters)*



ANASTASIA VRACHNOS / AP

Youths riot in Jakarta

A machete-wielding youth chases another during riots in Jakarta yesterday. Police fired plastic bullets at hundreds of stone-throwing protesters in the Indonesian capital's Matraman area. Three rioters and one police officer were injured in the clashes, which broke out when the officers tried to disperse brawling gangs and students. Three police motorcycles were burnt. The rioters later dispersed and anti-riot squads patrolled the area in trucks. Gang brawls are common in Jakarta, but the authorities are concerned about rising lawlessness after a year marked by persistent unrest. *(AP)*

Roman claim to Paris galls the French

Conquering invaders founded the capital, writes **Ben Macintyre**

THE long-held belief that Paris was built on the site of an ancient settlement of Gauls has been exploded by a French archaeologist, who says the future French capital was founded from scratch by the invading Romans.

French historians have long adhered to the idea that the Roman city Lutetia, which became Paris, was built on top of a Gallic *oppidum*, or fortified town, of the Parisii tribe of Gauls. Thus, it could be argued that while the Roman conquerers developed what would eventually become Paris, the locals got there first.

In a new 600-page study of the city's origins, however, Didier Busson, a historian, argues that archaeological evidence indicates that Lutetia was a purpose-built Roman town with no indigenous roots, built out from the summit of the hill of Saint-Geneviève, on the Left Bank.

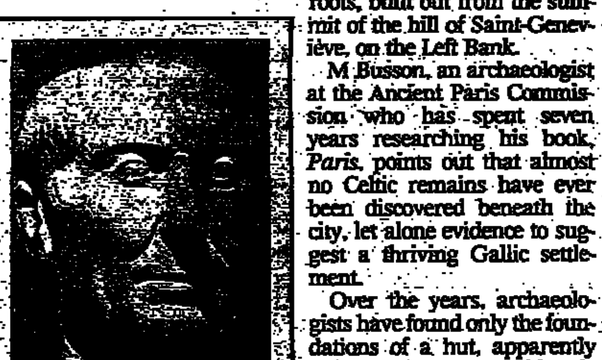
M Busson, an archaeologist at the Ancient Paris Commission who has spent seven years researching his book, *Paris*, points out that almost no Celtic remains have ever been discovered beneath the city, let alone evidence to suggest a thriving Gallic settlement.

Over the years, archaeologists have found only the foundations of a hut, apparently more likely to be prehistoric than Celtic, some Gallic coins and a few agricultural tools.

Lutetia was founded around 4BC, some 48 years after the Roman conquest. "What happened here between 52BC and 4BC?" M Busson asks. "Apparently, nothing. Under the Roman level, you can't find anything earlier. The Lutetia of 4BC was *not a refoundation* but a foundation, pure and simple."

A contemporary account described an *oppidum* of the Parisii on a bend or island in the river Sequana (the Seine), and French historians have long assumed, as a matter of national pride, that this was on the Ile de la Cité in the heart of Paris. But the only remains found on the island date from the Gallo-Roman period and not earlier — again undermining the national myth surrounding the city's earliest days.

"This is a major blow to received ideas," declared *Le Figaro* newspaper. But even M Busson has avoided pointing out the most embarrassing conclusion to be drawn from his research: if Lutetia was not built by the Romans on an ancient fort of the Parisii, it should never have been named Paris.



Caesar: many believe he founded the city

Italians gleeful

ITALIANS who take pride in their glory of ancient times reacted with ill-disguised glee yesterday to reports of the Roman origins of Paris (Richard Owen writes).

The Roman Emperor in 4BC was Augustus, who reigned from 27BC to AD14. He succeeded Julius Caesar, who conquered Gaul in 51BC and is considered by many scholars to be the real founder of Paris.

Caesar's Commentaries record that Celtic tribesmen in settlements on the Seine had gold coins, and that they burnt their dwellings rather than surrender.

Il Messaggero noted that since the excavations had revealed only Roman foundations, history would have to be rewritten.

'Militarised' Knesset worries the voters

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

WITH three former army chiefs of staff already declared candidates for the post of Prime Minister in the election on May 17, concern is growing among many Israelis that the nation's predeliction for political leaders with a military past has gone too far.

On Wednesday Amnon Lipkin-Shahak, leader of a new centre party, threw his hat into the ring less than a month after leaving the forces. He joined Ehud Barak, leader of the main opposition Labour Party, who left the top army post in 1994, and Rafael Eitan, founder of the hardline Tsomet Party, who entered politics in 1984.

"We are militarising politics and politicising the military," said Arieh Carmon, head of the Hebrew University's Institute for Democracy. Of the large number of military candidates, he said: "They are good people, but I am worried."

Yuri Stern, a Knesset backbencher likely to join a new Russian immigrant party, "Israel, Our Home", said yesterday: "The public is getting tired of officers going into politics. They do not necessarily have the goods for the job."



Buy now, blush for another 12 months



MAN ON TOP
JOE JOSEPH

If you're one of those people who don't visit the January sales, you should, because then you'll be able to witness at first hand the dramatic discounts that make it affordable for many of your colleagues to dress in a way that makes them look as soigné as Elvis just before he popped his final double-cheeseburger.

The people who shop in Versace and Gucci all year round aren't worried about price tags. If they had thought that lemon and magenta pashmina hotpants were cool, they'd have bought some. The reason they are in the sale at £1,840 below their original price is that nobody wanted them except Elton John, who uses them as novelty lens cloths for his spectacles.

When bargain hunters realise they've made this kind of mistake, they hide behind the excuse that, well, *of course* they're aware that they look ridiculous, but these happen to be *lucky* hotpants. (You: "You look ridiculous in those pashmina hotpants." Michael: "I know, but they always bring me luck, and I'm going for an interview this afternoon at the Treasury for Charlie Whelan's old job as Gordon Brown's press secretary.")

What these people haven't yet grasped is that sales are a sting operation, just like in that film with Robert Redford and Paul Newman. They aim to suck in the unwary punter. As Marx said — check before using this in your A-level economics exam — capitalism survives by adapting. Given the scale of overproduction today, capitalism makes ends meet by offloading all its surplus products over a fortnight in January at their true market value: to be able to pull this trick off, it pretends to sell these same goods at three times their true worth for the remaining 50 weeks of the year.

To help the sting along, stores actually pump a chemical into their air-conditioning system at sale time which induces you to buy, in bulk, items that you'd never dream of buying at all during the rest of the year: "Look, there's that Xylotex Protein shampoo, the shampoo that 'repairs your hair because it cares', but also makes it smell like a Boy Scout's sleeping bag. Hang on, they're giving away 50 per cent extra *free*. Now *that's* a bargain." So now you're lugging home a carrier containing 50 per cent more of a hair product you never even use.

At other times you're tricked into buying things you *do* use all year, such as shoes — only if it weren't for the sale discounts, you'd make do with the shoes you already own. But then you make the mistake of wearing your new shoes straight away, and because it's January and it's raining, they acquire that mysterious white tide-mark above the welt that is impossible to remove, except maybe with Nasa-developed technology.

The easiest remedy is to throw away the shoes and buy a fresh pair in the next sale. This is the retail equivalent of perpetual motion, a cycle which was activated by the flawed decision to make shoes out of leather in the first place. Cows are covered in leather, except for one bit: their feet. If even cows think that leather doesn't stand up as footwear material, maybe we should all listen.

The downside of funnelling so much till-ringing into a fortnight is that stores quickly fill with shoppers who haven't got out much for the past 50 weeks. These are people who are determined to exploit this rare opportunity to converse with sales assistants by imparting their life story ("The computer's for my son, Jack. He's 12 now. He's got a computer already, but he was using his cousin's Apple last weekend — an iMac was it? — and he noticed that..."). It's like overhearing that intimate conversation people have after they've just gone to bed with someone for the first time and feel they must confide every detail of their life to their new partner before dawn breaks. This shopper is invariably one place ahead of you in the queue at John Lewis.

But Adam Smith would recognise this sale-time frenzy, along with the emergence from retail hibernation of those life-story-tellers, as merely further proof of the market's invisible hand at work — because their effect is to make millions of us willing to pay three times what something is truly worth, purely for the privilege of being able to buy it during the 50 non-sale weeks a year when there are fewer other shoppers around.

It is precisely to avoid the January crush that I'm waiting until next month to return a shirt I got for Christmas. It shrank after I cleaned it in the bargain washing machine I bought in last January's sales, a machine manufactured in a country where underpaid workers like to wreak revenge on rich Westerners by mislabelling the dial on the wash programme, with the result that switching on a wash triggers as random an outcome as pulling the arm of a fruit machine.

In the meantime, I'll just have to wear the shirt as it is, and, if people snigger at the snug fit, I'll just explain about my washing machine. "I'd get rid of the damn thing," I'll tell them, "only it happens to be a *lucky* washing machine."

Square-bashing the gays

Calum McLean says he was 'treated like a dog' and suffered verbal rape in the Navy because he was gay. Now he and other victims are challenging the Armed Forces. **Vanora Bennett** investigates

Perhaps you believed that the Thought Police existed only in the dark, imaginary Britain of *1984*. But Calum McLean, arrested and interrogated in this country in 1994 on suspicion of thinking subversive homosexual thoughts, sees things differently.

McLean was serving as a medical assistant in the Royal Navy, which bans homosexuality. He was 20, and just beginning to ask himself the questions about his orientation that hadn't occurred to him when he joined up at 17. Snooping through his room, his flatmates found a pile of gay magazines and reported him to the authorities. The questioning that followed his detainment started a chain of events that led to a second arrest, discharge from the forces, a period of mental illness and a suicide attempt.

"They were like a terrier, refusing to give up," he says. "But there was no reason. There was nothing wrong with my work. I didn't commit any offence on base, never had sex on base. At that point my being gay was only a state of mind."

Now McLean is one of more than 60 sacked homosexual ex-Service staff who, organised by activist groups, will be taking the Ministry of Defence on in court. They want compensation. But mostly, they say, they want justice.

"I feel I should be compensated. They treated me like a dog. I want something back in order to start building my life up again," says McLean. "Since my discharge I've just floated around for four years. This will put a lot of devils to rest."

The gay activists' ultimate aim is to overturn the forces' ban on employing people of "homosexual orientation", those who think gay thoughts even if, in daily life, they consciously avoid all sexual contact so as to keep jobs they love.

Activists say dropping the ban would bring our war machine up to date. Many Nato countries' forces, they note, put restrictions on homosexual *and* heterosexual activity on base, but deem troops' sexual thoughts and off-base life private. Gay rights groups see the British regulation as old-fashioned and irrelevant in a liberal country whose government includes openly gay officials.

"We have women in the front line now, so relationships are inevitable. With women there are clear rules on sexual behaviour and how relationships should be conducted: discreet, off base, off duty," says Duncan Lustig-Prean, the spokesman for the gays-from-the-military group Rank Outsiders. "If it's like that, it's not an issue I'd need to act on as a commander.

"But if a couple are sneaking off to have sex in an office or whatever, the rules are clear. You move one partner on. If people misbehave, they should be disciplined. We don't think there should be some weird sexual libertarianism in the Army. And I would fully support quite stern action if there was any homosexual activity of that kind."

> The MoD was told to hand over tapes of former servicemen

Lifting the ban altogether is a long-term goal, but the activists' first target is to win acceptance of their claim that the lengthy and humiliating interrogations to which suspected homosexuals are subjected are sexual harassment. So, they say, were the arrests of several of the group when homosexuality in the services was still considered a crime. (Being of homosexual orientation, while decriminalised in 1994, is still grounds for administrative discharge.)

"I had a hellish interrogation," McLean recalls. "It was like verbal rape."

Lustig-Prean says the way gays and lesbians are interviewed — bombarded with hostile demands for details of their sexual preferences — is cruel. Suicidal thoughts are common among those discharged.

"The ministry has always argued that it's very easy to leave the forces by simply saying that you're gay. To establish that you're not pulling a fast one, they say they need to ask these questions. But it doesn't wash," he says. "If they've already got the information about your being gay, you can be discharged. They don't need to ask such things as whether you are the active or passive partner. The way this policy is enacted is unjust and cruel."

Lustig-Prean says the Services lose between 100 and 200 people a year because of their homosexuality. Although he estimates that it costs taxpayers £50 million a year to enforce the ban — including the expenses of surveillance, administration and wasted training — MoD officials say losses are tiny. The total services intake is 25,000 recruits a year.

As far as the MoD is concerned, the ban makes sense for practical reasons and is not a moral judgment. "To have people with homosexual orientation serving would undermine combat effectiveness," says an MoD spokesman, Tim Watkinson. "With imposed communal living in single-sex accommodation, under stress and under fire, it could cause unease, cause relationships to become polarised and undermine efficiency."

After all, officials say, the ban is not a secret. Recruits are told about it at the start and cannot claim to be surprised if it is later applied to them.

But most recruits are taken on as teenagers. Like Calum McLean, they may become aware only gradually that they are gay. And if they do start worrying about it once they are serving, they will find few people to confide in inside the military world.

Nowadays, says Watkinson, people in the Services are encouraged to discuss any possible homosexual feelings with a commanding officer, military doctor, chaplain or welfare officer. "It's dealt with as discreetly and sensitively as possible, a chat with the commanding officer, no police or anything like that," he says. But because these officials are in the military chain of command, they are duty-bound to report any subordinate's possible homosexual inclination. This leads to removal from work — not an option likely to encourage a soldier or sailor who is unsure of his feelings.



MICHAEL SCOTT/JOHN PAUL PHOTOGRAPHY

Calum McLean, discharged from the Royal Navy for being gay: "There was nothing wrong with my work and I didn't commit any offence on base"

In a tacit admission that something more is needed, confidential telephone helplines became available in 1996. But the principle of guidance from inside the Armed Forces remains, as Watkinson says, that "we would advise people to think carefully through their sexuality. If they turned out to be homosexual, they'd be asked to go."

Activists' earlier attempts to challenge employers' rights to dismiss staff for their sexual orientation have failed in British courts. This time around, at an industrial tribunal in Croydon, South London, they will be forced to shift their ground.

At the tribunal, Rank Outsiders and the gay lobby group Stonewall are claiming sexual harassment — a lesser complaint about the manner in which their clients were dismissed, rather than a look at the principle for which they were dismissed. All they can achieve from this case is compensation, although they hope that victory would then lead to more attempts to lift the ban altogether when it next comes up for review, in 2001.

In a sign that the tide may be turning in the their favour, the tribunal has ordered the MoD to hand over tapes of interviews with five dozen former servicemen and women thrown out because of their sexuality. "We are pleased the MoD has been forced to back down," Stonewall's executive director, Angela Mason, said after the December hearing.

Jean Gould, of the Birmingham solicitors Tyndenhalls, which is handling many of the cases, says cautiously: "There's an expectation that the political climate is such that there will be change."

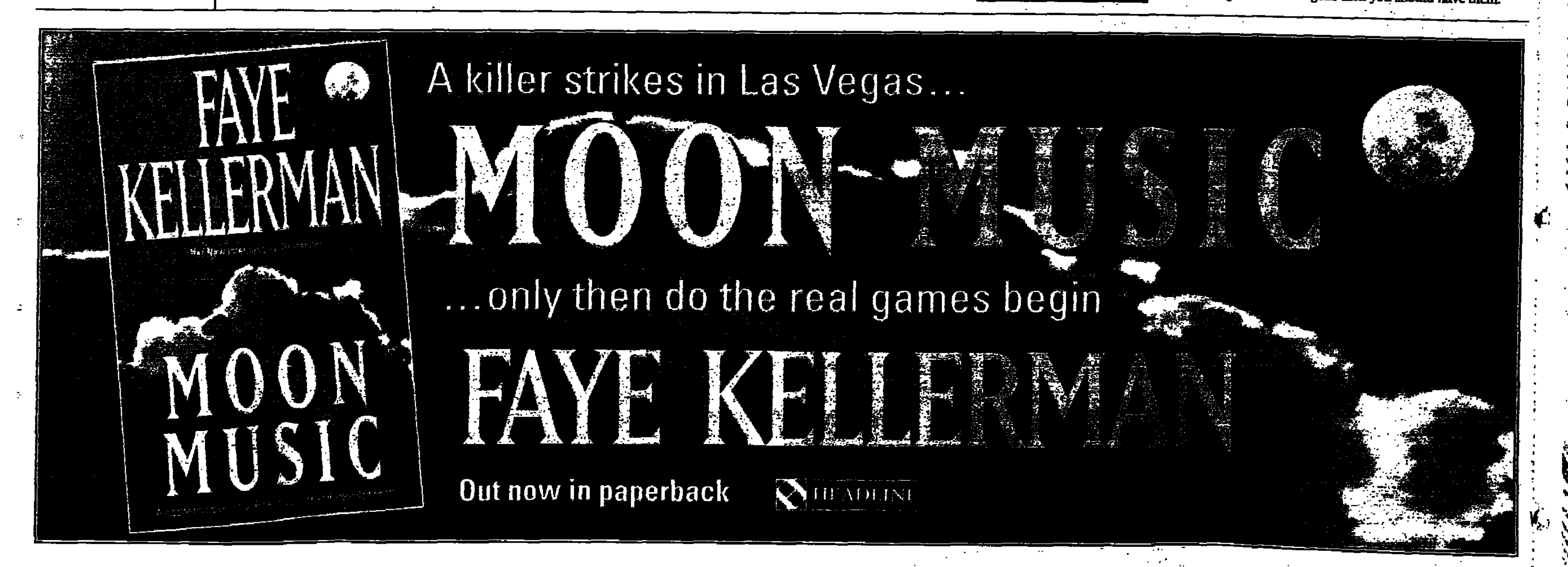
Britain's Armed Forces have always prided themselves on living by tougher rules than the rest of society. But tolerance may be more widespread in the ranks than senior officers think, says McLean. After news of his second arrest and 24-hour bout of interrogation were leaked around his base at Prestwick, in Scotland, McLean says he was "terrified" to go back to the corridor of "chefs, known in the Royal Navy for hard drinking and hard fighting" where he lived.

"But they couldn't have been more supportive. They knew I did my job properly and was a professional. 'It's unbelievable', they all said, 'it's unfair'. If it wasn't for the lads, it would have been much worse to be discharged. For me, that blows out of the water the MoD's argument about the boys on the ground not liking to have homosexuals about."



A. S. Byatt on growing up with books

When I was young the life I read about in books was far more exciting than real life. I didn't like books about children, I didn't like books pandering to me. I don't like multicultural books about housing estates and milk cartons which try and impose an adult mindset onto children. Children want strange adventures. If you want pirates you should have pirates and if you want dinosaurs and genies and dragons then you should have them.



Just looking, thanks



CUTTING EDGE
JANE SHILLING

There is supposed to come a moment in every woman's life — you might call it the onset of middle age, I suppose — when her interest in buying pretty things for herself is overtaken by her interest in buying pretty things for the house. When given the choice between a Fendi croissant bag and a cherrywood secretaire from The Conran Shop, she chooses the secretaire without a pang. For some reason this moment has yet to overtake me. It is true that my interest in majolica and rustic French armoires is keener than it was a decade ago, but my love affair with clothes shows no sign of cooling. The effect on the pocketbook, particularly at sales time, is catastrophic.

This year I gave myself a stern briefing about my conduct during the great bargain hunt. No More Clothes, was the gist of it. Nothing but sensible household items, such as china, to boost the chipped selection of mismatches to which my butter-fingered washing up has reduced us; a new throw for the drawing-room sofa and a great many dreary plain white sheets.

Just think, I said to myself, how much nicer it will be not to have to bite and scratch your way along the fashion thoroughfares of Knightsbridge and Bond Street; how grown up you will feel at not having to struggle, red-faced, into some unsuitable garment in a smelly communal changing room; how mature not to be joining the sad queue of wannabes outside Gucci (particularly since the whole point of Gucci is that it has to be *this* season's).

I can't say my Inner Shopper was convinced, but I set off anyway, mind firmly turned towards crockery, and found some at Jerry's Home Stores in Fulham Road, where creamy plates and bowls, scattered with dark blue stars, are reduced by about half — £6 (£11.95) for a plate, £4 (£8.95) for a bowl. At The Conran Shop, cream earthenware, prettily handpainted with little black leaves and red rosehips is £8.50 (£12.95) for a large plate and £9.50 (£14.95) for a breakfast cup. Cobalt blue coffee cups, handpainted with gold stars, are £3.75 (£7.50), and silver metal spoons and forks, amusingly embossed with tiny spoon and fork motifs, are £3.50.

If you can bear to think about buying presents, Conran is the ideal place to stock up. A semi-circular leatherbound notebook is £12.50 (£19), a large photograph album with a hinged aluminium cover £26.50 (£39.95). Mandarin and neroli body lotion in a frosted glass bottle is £13 (£19.95), and crocheted string bags in vivid colours — lime, cornflower, mandarin orange — with circular metal handles are £6.50 (£9.95). Gardeners will snap up the frosted glass flowerpots £4.50 (£6.95), the multipocketed burlap apron, £5 (£7.50), and the beautiful Victorian glass bell cloches, £19.50 (£29.95), while label-conscious children will want boxes of mini candy canes, £1.50, cotton piqué pyjamas with a giraffe appliqué, £16.50 (£24.95), and an adorable dolly's tea service in a little wooden crate £13.50 (£20).

Wondering what had happened to the reported frenzy of bargain hunters — Brompton Road was almost deserted, except for Chris Evans and a gaggle of guffawing courtiers — I made for The Scotch House, where a shell-pink cashmere blanket is £247 (£495) and pastel mohair throws are £49.95 (£85), and then for Harvey Nichols, where Ken Turner's clove carnation-scented candles in silvered metal bowls are £31.50 (£45).

Sailing down the escalator, eyes rigidly to the front to avoid the temptation of the fashion floors, I caught sight of Joan Collins, magnificent in puce velvet boots and a baby pink Argyll twinset. She swept into the Alberta Ferretti concession, plucked a frock from the rail, wrinkled her wonderfully preserved nose and swept out again in the direction of Givenchy, where I, hot on her trail, was brought to a halt by the most beautiful coat I have ever seen — black wool, embroidered all over with maple leaves, £780 (£1,560). I wanted it more than I've ever wanted anything (except a house in Chelsea and a fox terrier). I didn't buy it, though. And in the course of that afternoon I also didn't buy an embroidered tweed shift by D&G, £70 (£140), a cashmere and silk jersey dress by Jasper Conran, £175 (£350), a floor-length silver sheepskin coat by Nicole Farhi, £900 (£1,499), and a grey hooded cashmere top with satin cuffs by Amanda Wakeley, £208 (£297).

Then I went to Joseph and didn't buy a pale grey cashmere and silk shawl edged with crystal beads, £163 (£245), a sky blue chiffon skirt with white beaded snowflakes by Matthew Williamson, £290 (£435), and a fluffy white lambskin jacket, £433 (£649). At Voyage (where I don't suppose they would have let me in anyway) and Georgina von Etzdorf, I resisted reductions of 40 per cent, although I badly want one of von Etzdorf's velvet dresses (originally £450). I didn't even buy a fine wool-mix camisole at Laura Ashley, £15 (£30), although I ought to have done; I feel a hard winter coming on and they are prettier than woolly vests.

In Russell & Bromley I spurned a pair of gold kid flip-flops, £49 (£79.99), and a black satin mule with a silver kitten heel, £79 (£115). But in Fenwick, slightly unhinged by my prodigies of self-denial, I unaccountably purchased a black Sun & Sand T-shirt with a strip of glittery silver barbed wire across the front, £15 (£29). I can't think what got into me. Next thing I know I'll be calling Cher and asking for her dressmaker's number.

It was an heroic effort, all that non-shopping, I can tell you. But it's not over yet. The Manolo Blahnik sale begins today. And if I go, as I dare say I shall, having attended every sale in the past decade, I know what will happen. A mysterious force, like the one that spirits the ruby slippers on to Dorothy's feet in *The Wizard of Oz*, will divest me of my stout walking boots and replace them with a spindly pair of gold kid mules. And a bit later I shall watch helplessly as my hand writes out, all by itself, the cheque that would have kept me in plain white cotton sheets until 2100.

SCOPE-TRANSWORLD

My love affair with clothes shows no sign of cooling. The effect on the pocketbook, particularly at sales time, is catastrophic

SIX OF THE BEST

BENEFIANCE REVITALIZING EYE CREAM, £31.50
Rich but not heavy and easily absorbed. Instantly replenishes moisture and reduces the appearance of fine lines.
Shiseido, all major department stores (0171-630 1515) **9/10**

SERVITAL, £29 15ml, £51 30ml, £75 50ml
This milky cream is sticky but left skin feeling smooth and reduced fine lines.
Syence, salons and selected department stores (0800 838 670) **8/10**

CHANEL'S LIFT SERUM EXTREME £47.75
Expensive, but has a miraculous effect on neglected, dehydrated skin, leaving it supple and youthful. Definitely irons out fine lines around the eyes. Wonderful.
Chanel, major department stores nationwide **9/10**

DOUBLE SERUM 38, £39
Only a little is needed leaving skin feeling firm but not dry. Excellent.
Clarins, all major department stores (0171-629 2979). **9/10**

RE-NUTRIV INTENSIVE LIFTING CREME, £100
This heavy cream takes time to absorb, leaving skin sticky. Smells slightly waxy, but after weeks of regular use it worked well on fine laughter lines. Very expensive.
Estée Lauder, at selected department stores (0800 525501) **7/10**

TIME COMPLEX CAPSULES, £45.50 for 60 capsules.
Clear round box contains pink phials of clear fluid, one for each day's application. Makes dry, wrinkled skin softer and more supple.
Elizabeth Arden, at major department stores nationwide **8/10**

COMPILED BY DEBORAH BRETT

Objects of desire

New York handbag guru Kate Spade is now designing for inside your bag too. What makes this matching diary, notebook and agenda so desirable is the stationery inside them. All decorated with beautifully detailed watercolour illustrations. Personal organisers start at £88, illustrated stationery starts at £12. Available in the UK from Harvey Nichols 0171-584 0011

DB

A Rosa by any other name....

Mary Ann Sieghart on the subtle snobbery of baptism

"Emileeee! Sophieeee! Jaaames!" The mother's cry resounds not at the gate of some prep-school playground, but across the muddy waste of an inner-city park. She might well have been christened Sharon, Tracy or Michelle herself; but in giving her children "posh" first names, she and many millions of others will help to make the Britain of the next century a far less class-conscious place than now.

For there has been a revolution in the naming of babies. If you had looked round a state primary school in the 1970s and found pegs labelled Chloe, Jessica and Georgia, or Thomas, James and Luke, you would have assumed that its catchment area was a desirable middle-class suburb. Now it is just as likely to be on the fringe of a council estate. But you would not know. For the difference is that you can no longer tell a child's background from its name.

The latest list of the country's most popular babies' names, published this week by the Office for National Statistics, shows barely a moniker that would disgrace a duke's daughter. Maybe Danielle would not pass muster: but she is a rare exception in a 50-strong list of Jessicas, Hannahs, Charlottes, Olivias and Emmas. And the boys too sound almost uniformly middle-class: Jack, James and Thomas are the favourites, followed by Daniel, Joshua and Matthew.

So where are the Kylies and Donnas, the Kevins and Waynes of yesteryear? They are busy giving their children names that will not haunt them. It was in the 1960s and 1970s that working-class names diverged from middle-class ones, and the result has been a generation of people who feel that their origins have been labelled for life.

Compare the national list of favourite names in 1954 with that of *Times* birth announcements, and you find a remarkable similarity — even though the middle class was smaller then, so the national figures were dominated by working-class babies. For boys, seven out of the top ten were the same in both groups: the solid, classless British names such as John, David, Michael, Peter and Robert. Girls, too, shared six of the top ten: Susan, Anne, Mary, Elizabeth, Margaret and Patricia.

But ten years on, in 1964, girls in particular had diverged. There was just one common name in the top ten: Susan. The national list had names like Julie, Karen, Jacqueline and, of course, Sharon. Tracey was sixth; Tracy, eleventh. Combined, they might have come top. Yet *Times* readers were naming their babies Sarah, Caroline, Catherine, Emma and Fiona.

The 1970s showed a similar pattern. Nationally popular names were Claire, Nicola, Lisa, Joanne, Michelle and Samantha, while the professional classes were still plundering their 19th-century novels for Emily, Charlotte, Sophie, Lucy and Victoria. Only three names — Helen, Emma and Sarah — straddled both.

Yet, by 1984, names like Karen and Tracey had dropped not just out of the top ten, but the top 50. And ten years later they had vanished from the top 100. Today's popular names, such as Chloe, Laura, Rebecca, Victoria and Charlotte, cross class boundaries with ease.

Parents seem to be less adventurous with their boys. Until this decade, the staple names like Christopher, David, Michael, Andrew, Richard and Mark jostled for position in the national top ten, while *Times* readers mainly opted for rulers' names, such as William, James, Charles, Oliver, George and Edward.

But look at the national top 50 boys' names now, and there are no Darrens or Waynes. No embarrassment awaits in later life those who have been named after an Old Testament character, such as Daniel, Joshua and Samuel, all in the top ten. These are good old-fashioned epithets — and babies called Dan, Josh and Sam could feel just as much at home at Eton as at the local comp.

> You can drop an accent or work your way out of poverty

This is great news for a country that has always set too much store by birth and upbringing, and not enough by achievement. American Sharons who come over here are shocked by the snobbery they encounter; at home, they are happy to be associated with Sharon Stone, and suffer no indignity at their sobriquet.

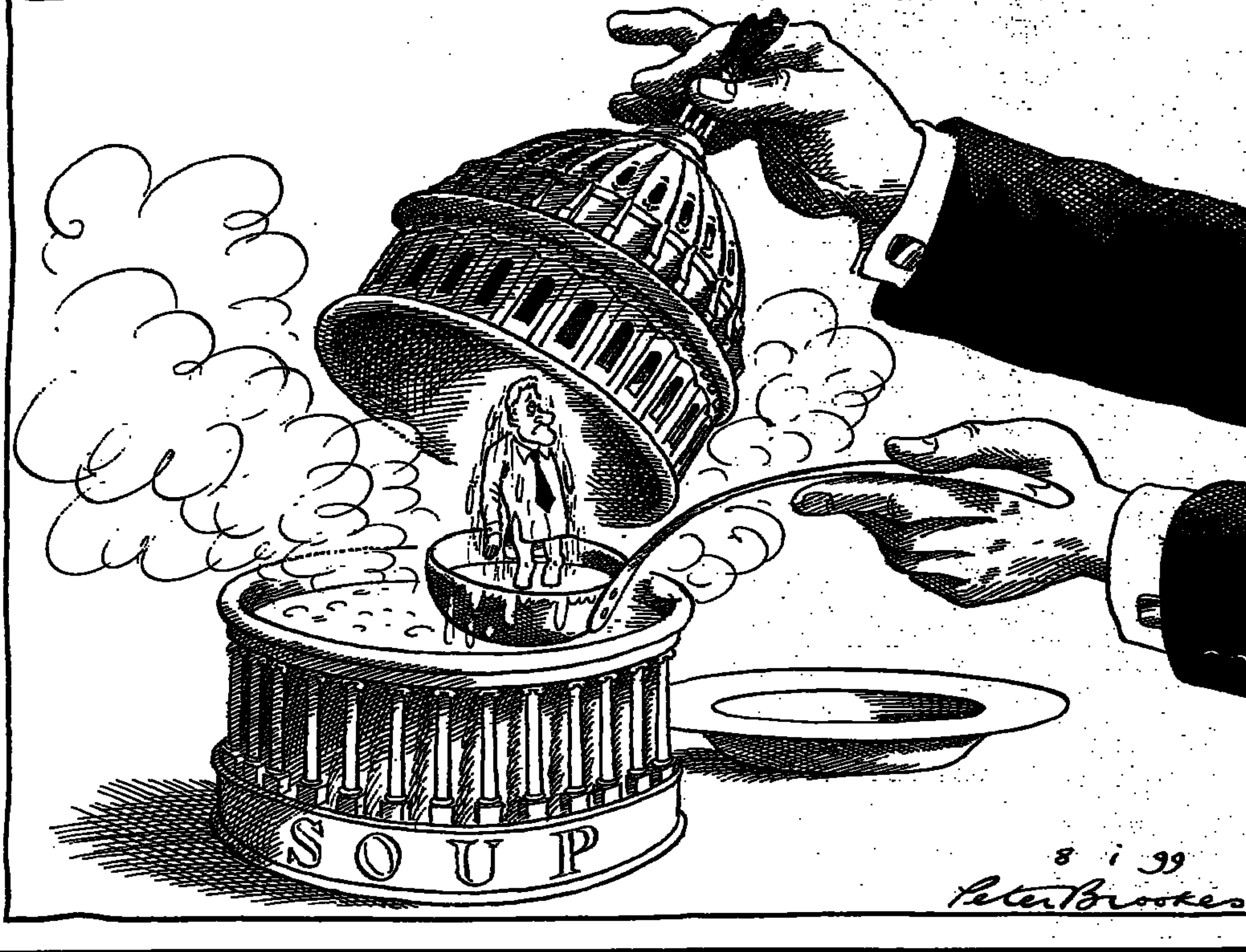
But here, you can shake off an accent, you can educate and work your way out of poverty, but a name can be an almost indelible mark of your origin. Some people change it, but that is a revolutionary step and a bureaucratic nightmare.

My parents gave us each four Christian names so that we could simply opt for another if we hated the first. I was grateful, in fact, to have one that was class-neutral. When I trained in a gymnastics club in a deprived southeast London borough, I was hugely relieved not to be called Davina or Lavinia, like some of my classmates at boarding school. Mary Ann was easily misheard as Marianne and raised no eyebrows.

When my children were born, I was equally determined not to saddle them with easily identifiable class-based names. As it turns out, all their friends, in a state school with a broad social mix, have roughly the same sort of name. It simply is not an issue.

So, away with Gemma and Donna. Out with Lucretia and Tarquin. And welcome to a society whose classes are so fluid that snobbery can now be dissolved in the wash. Next step: break down the barrier between private and state schools. But that is for another day...

maryann.sieghart@the-times.co.uk



A brief history of times

What does the millennium mean? The Chief Rabbi, **Dr Jonathan Sacks**, on what we should be celebrating

The millennium is a Christian moment. But it is also a landmark in the history of Western civilisation in which all of us have a share. The question — suddenly urgent, surprisingly obscure — is where are we going? What, as the time approaches, is the meaning of this hour?

There could be no more poignant symbol of our confusion than the Millennium Dome itself. Consider its predecessors. The Great Exhibition of 1851 told of a Britain self-confident as an imperial power. The Festival of Britain a century later spoke of a nation reassembling itself after war and looking forward to a new Elizabethan age. By contrast, the Millennium Dome is strangely bereft of meaning. It is probably the first great national symbol about which no one is altogether sure what it symbolises. Nor is this accidental. It has to do with a profound crisis in our sense of time.

One of the surprise bestsellers is the United States last year was Thomas Cahill's *The Gifts of the Jews*. Cahill's argument is that we owe to the Hebrew Bible one of the great concepts of Western civilisation — the idea of linear time. It is in biblical narrative that, for the first time, we encounter the notion that time itself is the setting of the human journey toward a destination — the Promised Land, the Messianic Age, the Kingdom of Heaven. It was this sense of travelling that gave the West its distinctive orientation towards the future.

Biblical thought stands in sharp contrast to an earlier vision, the world of myth. The most ancient documents we possess tell of humanity's first attempts to imagine order in societies threatened by natural catastrophe — floods, famines, earthquakes, droughts. These were, or so it seemed, the battles of the gods. The gods themselves were forces of nature. The great drama of myth is the struggle for cosmos against chaos. Its longing is for a world in which stability rules. Time is defined by those things that never change: the movement of the planets, the cycle of the seasons, the eternal recurrence of birth, growth and death. All things return to their source and begin again. Mythical time is cyclical time.

Against this background, few things could have been more revolutionary than the double exodus with which the Bible begins, Abraham from Mesopotamia, Moses and the Israelites from Egypt. Biblical faith defines itself in opposition to the two great civilisations of the ancient world. God is no longer to be identified with nature. Nor is His image, mankind. Instead we are a fissile mixture of "dust of the earth" and the "breath of God". We speak. We think. We conceptualise. We can imagine a world different from the one that exists. The hierarchies of society are not written into the architecture of the universe. To be human is to be free, capable of choosing between good and evil. If not alone, then in partnership with God and our fellow human beings, we can begin to build a new society, one that honours the equal dignity of all persons as citizens under the sovereignty of God.

> We are not just creators of the world in which we live, but creations

Time was transformed. No longer was it essentially static, the preservation of the status quo. Instead it became the stage on which is played the great drama of humanity as it responds, or fails to respond, to the call of God. We are no longer held captive by the past. We are not destined endlessly to repeat our ancestors' mistakes. Our vision is not bounded by what is. A new personality appears: the prophet, the person for whom history is not, in Joseph Heller's words, "a trash bag of random coincidences torn open in a wind", but instead the long road across the wilderness to freedom. A new emotion is born: hope, the belief that our dreams are not mere waves that break as they reach the hard rocks of reality, that human aspiration is not in vain. Time is the narrative of the human journey, a journey undertaken with hope because, though the way is long and hard, we are not alone.

At some stage, this vision underwent a subtle but fateful change. We can't date it precisely, but it happened around the 17th and 18th centuries. Europe had been traumatised by the wars that followed the Reformation. People were fighting one another in the name of God — often in the name of the same God. Far from bringing peace, religion seemed to bring conflict. Far from pursuing truth, religion seemed sunk in prejudice which it was prepared tenaciously to defend.

To thoughtful minds the solution seemed obvious. Secularise politics. Grant religion influence, not power. Distinguish knowledge from faith. Discover truth through reason and experimentation. Above all, pursue science. The religious vision of mankind's journey on Earth was translated into a secular frame of reference.

Old words were given new meanings — words like creative, civilisation, improvement, evolution and reform. The term "modern" which, prior to the 18th century, had signalled change in a negative or neutral sense, began to be charged with positive connotations. One word above all others summed up the new consciousness: progress, the secular equivalent of linear time.

Progress was the great hope of the Enlightenment. Through science, humanity would conquer ignorance. Through reason it would banish prejudice. Through trade it would develop the wealth of nations. Few ideas have had greater simplicity or power. To it we owe the Industrial Revolution, the spread of democracy, and the growth of tolerance as an ideal.

As we approach the end of the 20th century, however, our certainties have been shaken. We now know that the Enlightenment failed to prevent the Holocaust. Technology has given us the ability to destroy life on Earth. Reason did not cure prejudice. The growth of consumption threatens the environment whose air we breathe. Those who define our present situation as "post-modernity" are right in this respect. We have lost the simple faith that new necessarily means better. As Robert Bellah put it, "Progress, modernity's master idea, seems less compelling when it appears that it may be progress to the abyss."

The answer is not to move backwards. Instead it is to recall that there always was more than one version of linear time. There was the Enlightenment narrative of forward motion, driven by science and human rationality. Alongside it, and never wholly eclipsed, was the biblical vision of time as a journey.

According to this, the human story is not simple and straightforward. There are setbacks, digressions, wanderings, false turns. But these are not grounds for the death of hope, because there is always a sense of destination: the just society, heaven's kingdom, a world of human dignity and grace.

I sense, in my children and their contemporaries, an urgent need for a coherent narrative through which to make sense of our headlong journey into the future. In a world that spins ever more rapidly, whose certainties are fewer by the day, they search for solid ground on which to build their lives.

My guess is that they will increasingly remember what an earlier generation laboured to forget. We are not just creators but also creations, guardians of a world we did not make. Nor are we, as the Enlightenment believed, atomic individuals navigating the sea of chance by the compass of reason alone. We are persons formed at least in part by our traditions and institutions: families, communities, the moral life itself. Ultimately these rest on a sense of the transcendent that binds us to one another as fellow citizens in covenant with God.

The difference between the two linear narratives is this. Progress begets optimism. The religious journey engenders hope. Optimism is the belief that things will get better. Hope is the courage to make them better, born in the faith that we are not alone. Unlike optimism, hope survives even during tough and confusing times. That is why we need it now.

comment@the-times.co.uk

Simon Jenkins returns next week.

Philip Howard



You can keep your foolish notions of Christmas past

The cure for admiring the House of Lords is to go and look at it. The cure for asserting that *The Times* is going to the dogs is to read back numbers. The cure for believing that Fings Ain't What They Used To Be is to have been stormbound for the past fortnight.

In Ulster and truly Darkest Ayrshire from Boxing Day onwards, gales have wiped out electricity, blocked the roads and reduced life to the Dark Ages. No heat other than from logs, no cooking except for baked potatoes, no hot water, no television, no communications. The roof was blown off the theatre during the panto, giving Mother Goose the ad lib of a lifetime, as we scrambled for the exits: "This is the first time that I have brought the house down." Nostalgia for some golden age in the past is to imagine the fun without the pain.

But surely candlelight is a more humane illumination than fluorescent lighting that is activated by a footfall? Oh no it isn't. When after three days of recorded piffle you eventually find a telephone and get through to RobRoyPower to scream for help: "Wire you insulate?", the reply is: "I couldn't get ohm earlier."

But at least you can read a good book by candlelight? Oh no you can't. Even the Christmas candles run out in two days, and the only shop has run out of matches also. And the light that wax gives is so dim and flickers so much that you need every candle in the cottage for reading, a crime of selfishness vetoed by the non-readers. Either print was bigger or eyes were more accustomed to dim light. But how Bess of Hardwick Hall and her ladies stitched all that intricate embroidery in the dim winter evenings by candlelight is a mystery. How did ancient Romans read post meridiem?

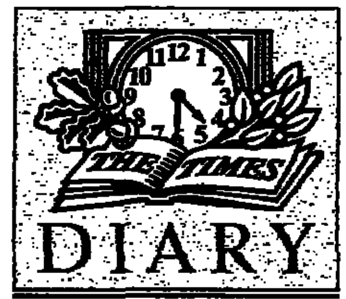
But you can get back to the traditional values of family games and story-telling around the peat fire. Oh no you can't. Stories of the adventures of Hercules or Aeneas cannot compete for attention of small boys, alas, with Tom and Jerry. Hide and seek in the dark causes breakages, blood and screams. The oldest winter game of all, creating shadow figures on the wall of the cave with your hands, loses its attraction, and completely fails when the candles run out.

But at least there was some Test cricket on the radio from sunny Australia to keep you comatose through the long nights. This is true. But you forget that the electrics are off. The batteries have run out. So the only radio that works is Jamie's Christmas present of a clockwork radio. This runs down every quarter of an hour. Winding it up sounds like Big Ben clearing his throat. So sleepers who care nothing for cricket complain from their beds and scream from their cots or swear from their sofas.

Is there nothing to be said for the golden age before electricity? Well, at least they had only human burglar alarms. For reasons only intelligible to a physicist, the power cut has set off the alarm. Robert the Bruce only knows why there is a burglar alarm, since the only neighbours within miles of potential earshot have four woolly legs. But when you eventually get through to Deacon Brodie Burglar Alarms, he says: "Och, the battery will run down in an hour." Wrong. So after three days and nights of BELLS that arouse no attention from the sheep, the medieval solution is to take a pickaxe to the box.

Peasant living brings out neighbourliness from those who have Agas or spare blankets. Surviving hardships gives one a warm metaphorical glow, but shaving or bathing babies in cold water does not. It is a small triumph to remember how to hand milk the neighbouring cows, cut off from their milking machines. But one had forgotten, of course, what hard work it is on the fingers and how early in the morning milking starts.

So do not believe the sentimental nostalgics. Electrics and hot water are goods. Medieval feasts were jolly only if you had a hall like Penshurt or Knole, and an army of scullions to burn their fingers. The millennium bug can do what it likes to computers. But if it switches off the electricity, I am taking to my bed until it switches it on again. Bed is the best place to be for the millennium anyway.



Double fault

THOSE two toffs, Lady Antonia Fraser and Sir Evelyn de Rothschild, have teamed up to thwart plans to build on tennis courts where D.H. Lawrence was once a ball-boy. Campden Hill Tennis Club, one of London's oldest and smartest, has been served an ace by Thames Water, which owns an empty reservoir under the 100-year-old club — it plans to turn the Holland Park site into £120 million of "luxury homes". Early this century, the 1,000-strong club was the West London playground for a prewar literary set centered on Ford Maddox Ford and Ezra Pound: in 1908, Lawrence started a miserable spell as a teacher in Croydon and was slowly absorbed into the circle by Pound after pitching his poems at literary magazines. Pound asked Maddox Ford and chums if he could bring his new friend to the club, and Lawrence — not a player — was soon a 24-year-old ball-boy.



In these harsher post-privatisation climes, club members have been tempted by Thames Water to accept 21 town houses and 41 flats on half of their two-acre site. In return for not parading in their whites outside Kensington & Chelsea's offices when the plan is considered on Monday, they are being schmoozed with a sports hall with 12 courts. Lady Antonia and Sir Evelyn (right) are not appeased. Says Mrs Harold Pinter: "We're very concerned about the noise and vibrations that will come when the building starts. The scheme will exacerbate traffic problems."

● *CHARLIE WHELAN is an honourable man, so I believe his claim that he did not leak the story of Peter Mandelson's "loan" to his friend Paul Routledge. But I fear he may have given ammunition to less trusting sorts by enjoying lunch on Wednesday with the washed-up Routledge, author of the forthcoming hatchet job* "Mandy". *He was seen with his fellow Bolshevik at an "upmarket greasy spoon" in Clerkenwell. At the end of an exhausting lunch, I have heard that Whelan and Routledge broke into song with old favourites including a rendition of the battle hymn of the Soviet Air Force.*

Prince of piste

THE Prince of Wales has pulled off a spectacular triumph in Klosters. He and his chum Charlie Palmer-Tomkinson, Tara's dad, won the Beat Fop Cowbell Marathon Derby, an all-day event in which 60 teams tried to race as many miles as possible. The two Charlies covered 43 miles to win the main event and the seniors (qualification: the combined age of the two-man team must be over 100) — thus beating the favourite, Prince Harry and his ski-instructor partner, Bruno Sprecher, Charles's friend and local ski guide. The latter damaged his leg on the first run so he and Harry had to withdraw.

"To win you have to know every ball of snow and how to avoid the queues," I am told. "Charles really is a fairly impressive mover."

● *THOSE anoraks at Microsoft must like their boss. With Microsoft Office '98, tap in "I wish Bill Gates was dead" and check it with the built-in thesaurus, two options come up: "hilarious" and "I'll drink to that".*

Sloping off

TRUANCY on the slopes. As David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, urges parents not to take sprogs out of school in term-time (unless they are PM or Home Secretary), MPs and peers are swishing down the ski runs of Davos with their families. The parliamentary ski team, chaired by Denis MacShane and headed by those other notables Tom King and Lord Astor of Hever, trots off to the town every year to lose against the Swiss. The hundred-strong group will not pack its goggles away until this weekend — a week after the start of the school term.

"I deeply resent the way you exploit children in this way," says Hugh Bayley, a social security minister and one of the team, when asked why his two children were in Davos rather than at school this week. "You make their life a misery. It makes me furious. It is the only time of year they are out of school. They have a rotten time anyway with a part-time dad." So as compensation, the lucky blighters receive a part-time education.

● *FRANK FIELD intends to be a good boy next term. He has tabled 28 questions for his successors at Social Security — just in case he did not already know the answers.*

Ground down

PETER PAN has had it's wings clipped at the National after the Never Bird suffered a fall. Susannah Fellows had to leave the show to be taken to hospital after slipping and cracking a rib. Although Susannah (pictured) is returning, all Never Bird feats will be perfomed by her understudy. "She can do the rest of the Mrs Darling stuff," I am told, "because we do her corset up really tight."

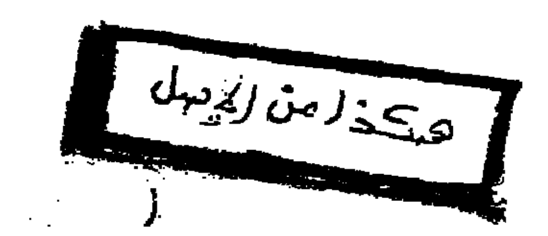


● *CAROL THATCHER has handbagged a worker painting the wall outside the Tate: "He was painting it a bilious purple. It was appalling. So I went up and asked whether that was his choice. He just mumbled." Poor chap.*

Whicker's way

SO WHAT coconut encrusted isle will host Alan Whicker for the millennium? Possibly the Channel Islands which, he says, "get great sunrises". And one does not need to fly. He is terrified of a plane crash caused by the millennium bug. "So why take that chance?"

JASPER GERARD





WHAT MONTY SAW

A racist verdict that Africa has done its best to prove right

The African is "a complete savage", whose *only hope* is a British colonial "master plan" to carve out giant West, Central and East African federations and unlock their vast wealth. *That bluntly contemptuous* and, to modern eyes, blatantly racist, verdict on the capacity of Africans for self-government, delivered 50 years ago by a British Chief of the Imperial General Staff, long dead, but only now made public, should in the normal course of history have no more than curiosity value in 1999.

In 1948, with the exception of Ethiopia, whose "state of medieval feudalism" so *appalled* Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, the flags of Britain, France, Belgium and Portugal still flew over black Africa. It was not until 1957, *nine years after Monty's* report on his tour of a dozen African territories, that Nkrumah's Ghana led the march to independence. But the map changed rapidly thereafter. Tony Blair may be courting, in South Africa, a country that achieved majority rule only recently; but it is nearly 40 years since atlases painted most of Africa in colonial hues.

Yet so badly have Africans in fact ruled themselves *that, were Monty alive today*, he might be claiming that he saw the future more clearly than the decolonisers who were to pull Britain out of Africa as precipitately as it had scrambled in the 1890s to get in. The roll-call of villains includes some of this century's most murderous; Amin, Bokassa, Mengistu and Abacha are only the most familiar. The rogue's gallery of incompetent, corrupt *dictators is longer still; take* your pick of past heads of state from Kenyatta, Hastings Banda or Sekou Touré, not to mention Nkrumah himself, *and innumerable* generals and jumped-up corporals. Tanzania and Zambia may have suffered from fools more than rogues, but the legacy of the lunatic, paternalistic socialism of Nyerere and Kaunda will take decades to reverse.

In parts of Africa, notably Uganda, Ghana and bits of the Horn, no-nonsense though still autocratic reformers are restoring hope, but in Kenya and Zimbabwe, *Presidents* Moi and Mugabe perpetuate a miserable tradition. Even in South Africa, for all the respect due to President Mandela, crime and corruption are rising, as is unemployment. It is not surprising that Africa tops the league for coups, unrepayable debt and civil collapse — and comes bottom, after receiving more aid per head than any other region, by every measure of prosperity or quality of life.

In Africa's apocalypse, the warrior is only one of the horsemen. But its anarchic wars seem unstoppable. This week, for the second time in a year, *Sierra* Leone's terrorised civilians cowered in their houses while murderous rebels battled for control of the capital against ineffectual government troops and Nigerian "peacekeepers". The rape of Congo, which finally rid itself last year of President Mobutu, prince of kleptocrats in a continent blatantly pillaged by its "fathers of independence", continues. This time half a dozen African governments are militarily involved, motivated more by greed for diamond loot than by solidarity with Mobutu's venally inept successor, Laurent Kabila. The shooting down of yet another United Nations plane takes wretched Angola, after a huge international investment in restoring peace, back towards war's abyss.

So was Monty right, or have Africans just been singularly unlucky in their rulers? In the judiciary and the churches, parts of the hounded press and many a village are enough examples of courageous opposition to misrule to challenge his sweeping verdict. And, however appalling Africa's civil rights record, Monty's grand design had no room for democracy either.

He demanded, rather than proposed, a permanent, intensive British engagement in Africa, dictated not by altruism but by *ambitions to rebuild Britain's, not Africa's*, prosperity. The then colonial secretary rejected his plans not on moral grounds but because he thought Africa too poor to be worth a "great expense of money and effort". Had Monty won, Britain would have imposed an indefensible, and unsustainable, version of apartheid. Britain could have ruled Africa better and left it better. But the sobering fact remains that *Africans today* are poorer than they were when Monty sought to make of the socialist Attlee an improbable second Cecil Rhodes.

BRING FORTH THE FORMS

How Mandelson can help his building society and himself

The Prince of Darkness, of all people, should know that *devils lurk* in details. The Government needs to put the events of the past fortnight behind it, and to shift attention from the reasons for resignations to its new policy agenda. But there are still *loose ends from Notting Hillgate that could* be fashioned into a new noose for Peter Mandelson unless he takes action.

Although the former Secretary of State for Trade and Industry protested that he had done nothing wrong in borrowing money from a friend to purchase his Notting Hill home, and that none need have known the details of a private arrangement between two opposition backbenchers, a third party *seems* to have been deceived in this deal long before either Mr Mandelson or Geoffrey Robinson became *ministers with interests to* declare. The Britannia Building Society, from whom Mr Mandelson secured a mortgage, apparently knew nothing of his private deal. If he withheld information from them, Mr Mandelson has placed himself and the society's officers in a difficult position. He should now make rapid amends for his reticence so far by embracing candour.

After interviewing Mr Mandelson yesterday, the Britannia is considering what action to take. If the society felt that Mr *Mandelson* had been less than candid in declaring his outstanding liabilities, then it is open to it to press charges. If details of Mr Robinson's loan were not included on the mortgage application form, there would be a case for a fraud prosecution. It is up to the society to decide on an appropriate course of action. But it has to operate in a delicate political framework.

The Britannia is one of those building societies which *has* retained its mutual character. It, and other mutuals, are looking to the Government of which Mr *Mandelson was so recently a part to help* protect them from individual members who wish to demutualise societies in search of a windfall. The minister responsible for these matters, Patricia Hewitt, has been less responsive to the mutual societies than they would wish and some suspect that the Government would be only too happy to see thousands secure windfalls in this potentially recessionary year. Given its *wish to secure a more favourable hearing* from Government about protecting its mutual status, the temptation exists for the Britannia to let Mr Mandelson off the hook, whatever he wrote on his form.

There are other good reasons why the society would not wish to prosecute. Mr Mandelson is likely to meet all his obligations, and he is clearly not a professional fraudster. It might be imagined that, all other things being equal, the matter could be dropped. But other things are not equal. There must be no suspicion *that favouritism* had been shown to Mr Mandelson for political reasons. The former minister can help the society out of its bind by placing all the documentation relevant to his loan and mortgage application in the public domain. Such a step would win applause and show that Mr *Mandelson* had absorbed the cautionary lessons of this affair. If he ever wants to be a prince again, he cannot afford darkness.

KNOW YOUR LIMIT

Why drink-drive levels should be left unchanged

Although this Christmas has been as joyous as any other, drivers have tempered their celebrations with moderation. The number failing breath-tests over the holiday fell by more than a fifth compared with the previous year. Good news in itself, this strengthens the *arguments* against the Government's proposals to cut the legal alcohol limit from 80mg to 50mg per 100ml of blood, barely *one pint* of beer. Sceptics — who apparently include the Prime Minister — recognise that this policy would impinge on millions of law-abiding citizens, while not effectively tackling the hard core of persistent drink drivers.

Attitudes *towards* drinking and driving have changed dramatically over the past two decades. The days when it was common for *motorists* to enjoy "one for the road" are over. As a result, British roads are among the safest in Europe — even *though the* legal limit is 30mg higher than in seven EU countries, and 60mg higher than in Sweden. The number of deaths *from drink*-drive accidents fell from 1,640 in 1979 to 540 in 1997. As the decline in deaths has begun to slow, the Government wants to target the dwindling numbers who continue to drink and drive. *While* this is a laudable aim, cutting the legal limit is *the wrong way to achieve it. Motorists two* and half times over the current 80mg limit cause half of all drink-driving related *deaths. This hardened group* is unlikely to change its behaviour if the level is reduced to 50mg. Ministers have been advised that, if they focused their efforts on these heavy drinkers, four times more deaths could be avoided than by cutting the overall limit. If the Government ignores this advice, it risks turning law-abiding citizens into criminals and undermining people's respect for the law.

An even more absurd argument in favour of changing the law has been made by Neil Kinnock, the EU Transport Commissioner. He believes that Britain's legal limit should be brought into line with other EU countries. Not only does this run entirely counter to the principle of subsidiarity; it defies reality. If there is any copying to be done, other EU countries should be matching *British* practice.

The public respects the drink-driving laws as they stand. Further moves to crack *down on serious offenders* would be supported. Yet lowering the limit would be an unacceptable, unnecessary act, making *millions* of drivers the victims of the Government's bossiness.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Impeachment and the rule of law

From Dr Robert McGeehan

Sir, The United States Constitution *envisages impeachment* as a procedure whose objects, in the words of the founders, include "the abuse or violation of some public trust". Perjury, or intentionally lying under oath when solemnly sworn to tell the truth, is a criminal offence which leading scholars on November 9 testified to the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives falls within the intended meaning of the founders' language *referring to "high crimes and misdemeanors"* (report, November 10).

John Chuckman (letter, December 28) writes *that impeachment is a* remedy against "an executive threatening our liberties". He is correct: since there can be no liberty without the rule of law, any undermining of the equal application of the law to every citizen threatens the freedom of all. Impeachment, therefore, is the appropriate constitutional step.

In the effort not to lose sight of what is really at stake in America's tacky but serious presidential (but *not* constitutional) crisis, reciting the nonsense that criminal falsehoods are somehow excusable if they can be packaged *as sexual prevarication is* deeply subversive of our liberty under the rule of law.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT McGEEHAN,
Cooks Corner Farm,
Freeland, Oxfordshire OX8 8HW.
January 7.

From Mr D. G. Appleton

Sir, How could such an august assembly as the House of Representatives so cripple a president and seriously damage the prestige and international authority of the United States?

Under the Anglo-Saxon legal conventions there exists such a thing as frivolous and vexatious litigation. The inquisition to which President Clinton has been subjected falls squarely within the scope of that concept. The obvious conclusion is that the whole business should be set aside and the Starr *report and its author* left to oblivion.

What the world has witnessed is not so much a legal process as a surpassing example of puritanical self-righteousness and hypocrisy, vindictiveness and turpitude. Is it too much to hope that the Senate will have the courage to recognise this and to set at naught the disastrous act of folly of the House?

Yours faithfully,
D. G. APPLETON,
5 Stowey Road, Taunton TA2 7NP.
January 7.

Sheffield housing

From Dr Sue Powell

Sir, Mr George Wedd (letter, January 5) rightly defends the recently listed Park Hill flats in Sheffield against those of your earlier correspondents (December 30) who argue for wholescale demolition.

Bulldozing buildings is a dubious approach to social and urban reform, and advocates of the demolition of Park Hill should surely learn from the past. Is it not contradictory to condemn the clearance policies of the Sixties (*when most people agreed* that Victorian "slums" should be torn down) and yet advocate a new clearance campaign for postwar housing?

In Leeds, the huge Quarry Hill estate, a monumental housing project of the 1930s, was demolished in the early Eighties. It could have been refurbished as low-cost housing, for example, for students. It has been replaced by an undistinguished jumble of Post-Modernist structures — and a great deal of ill-kempt grass and car-parking.

Is this progress? We have a duty to *make Park Hill work*.

Yours sincerely,
SUE POWELL,
7 Woodbine Terrace,
Headingley, Leeds LS6 4AF.
January 6.

Misuse of funds

From Mr J. K. M. Krawiec

Sir, Stephen Silber, QC, is quite correct ("Misuse of funds: civil servants who slip up", Law, January 5): a new law is needed on the *misuse* of public office.

However, such a law ought to apply not only to local government but also to all areas of the public sector, including both officials and politicians in central government.

Local government in *Britain* has a far higher standard of ethics than in other countries, and other parts of the public sector ought to be brought up to this standard.

Yours faithfully,
J. K. M. KRAWIEC
(Chief Executive and Town Clerk),
Southend on Sea Borough Council,
PO Box 6, Civic Centre,
Victoria Avenue,
Southend on Sea, Essex SS2 6ER.
January 5.

Letters that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — *0171-782 5046*. e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Christian compassion for refugees

From Dr R. E. Bancroft-Marcus

Sir, Archbishop Carey is right to appeal for more compassion for refugees, but the examples of successful integration cited by him and *The Times* (report, January 1) could have been better chosen.

To me, a refugee is someone who flees for his life to escape an advancing army or the threat of political assassination. Einstein may indeed have fled Nazi persecution, but he enjoyed an established reputation before leaving Germany to continue, not begin, his brilliant career. Chagall worked for the communist regime and left Russia as a result of an aesthetic dispute.

Marlene Dietrich, already a successful film star, left Germany before Hitler came to power: her motivation was fame and fortune in Hollywood, and her inclusion in the Archbishop's list strikes me as particularly insulting to all past and present victims of real persecution.

Those lucky enough to have sufficient wealth and international connections to leave a country at a time of their choosing and take up prosperous residence elsewhere are surely not refugees, but up-market economic migrants. A penniless "true" refugee, *whatever his talents or qualifications*, who graduates from a detention camp to a job in McDonald's, starts his British career with no such advantages.

The villagers fleeing murderous forces (on both sides) in former Yugoslavia appear to me eminently worthy of a Christian's compassion and support, whether or not they can ever make any return or contribution to our culture. We should make every *effort to avoid creating or acquiescing* in any situation — especially poverty and famine — which may dislodge large numbers of our fellow humans from their homes and their native environment.

Yours sincerely,
ROSEMARY E. BANCROFT-MARCUS,
30 South Avenue, Abingdon,
Oxfordshire OX14 1QR.
fbmrem@aol.com
January 1.

From Mr Alured Darlington

Sir, The Archbishop of Canterbury's new year message concerning refugees contrasts sadly with what has been regarded as a guideline decision in the Court of Appeal on sentencing passport offenders, *R v Singh* (report, November 5, 1998).

This placed the tariff for such offenders at a nationwide figure of six to nine months imprisonment, effectively doubling the previous tariff of three to four months imposed by Uxbridge magistrates' court. The latter, which serves Heathrow, has since followed that decision.

In their judgment their Lordships agreed with *R v Osman* that:

> Even when a defendant is under considerable personal pressure, as for example when he is a refugee seeking a decision in relation to an application for political asylum, his conduct cannot be excused if he defies the law and attempts to leave the country by using a passport which is not his . . . the courts must, when appropriate, *play their part in supporting the authorities*

The court went on to say that previous good character and personal circumstances of mitigation were of very limited value in such cases, which should generally be sentenced on a deterrent basis.

However, the deterrent value must be minimal because asylum-seekers are hardly likely to be aware of any tariff. The real offenders who are so aware, and who provide the bogus passports at exorbitant prices, are usually way out of the reach of the British legal system.

Although *R v Singh* has apparently been treated as a guideline case, the *court was not headed by the Lord* Chief Justice. In the spirit of the Archbishop's message, perhaps a guideline decision headed by him could herald a new policy for those whose only crime, in some cases at least, is that they want to protect their families or *themselves*.

Yours truly,
ALURED DARLINGTON,
Vickers and Co (solicitors),
183 Uxbridge Road, W13 9AA.
January 1.

Flu 'epidemic'

From the Director of the Royal College of General Practitioners

Sir, "How . . . do the powers that be know that there is no flu epidemic", asks Mr Ray Ellis (letter, January 7), if sufferers do not consult a doctor?

The number of persons identified *with influenza-like illnesses is clearly* based on those who consult and is inevitably an underestimate of the total sick population. Careful examination of the data we receive (especially the rates in differing age groups) allows us to make comparisons with influenza outbreaks in previous years.

It is on that basis that the word "epidemic" is applied and used in a national rather than a local context. We could on the one hand describe every winter outbreak of influenza as an epidemic and on the other hand confine its use to unusual situations.

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary provides two definitions of epidemic:

> Prevalent among a people or community at a special time, and produced by some special causes not generally present in the affected locality.
> *Widely prevalent, or universal.*

It is in this context that we reserve the word epidemic for the more serious outbreaks, since influenza is "generally present" in winter. The incidence data published by the RCGP are based on aggregated *national figures, and patterns* commonly vary widely in different parts of the country.

On a more positive note, whilst there is as yet no curative treatment for influenza in regular use in this country, recent developments with a class of drugs known as neuraminidase inhibitors herald this prospect within two years.

Yours faithfully,
DOUGLAS FLEMING,
Director, Royal College of General Practitioners,
Birmingham Research Unit,
54 Lordswood Road,
Birmingham B17 9DB.
January 7.

Leslie Stuart recalled

From Mr Sheridan Morley

Sir, Rodney Milnes's characteristically expert and enthralling account of the long-lost composer Leslie Stuart ("A toast to the *Florodora man*", Arts, December 30) omits one crucial detail. Stuart was among the very first British theatrical composers, ahead even of Gilbert and Sullivan, to have an entire film made of his life and music, *albeit one of considerable eccentricity*.

You Will Remember (1940), a title which in itself conveys unusual confidence since audiences could already have been expected to have almost entirely forgotten Stuart, consisted very largely of my late father Robert being wheeled along several British piers in a bathchair by Emlyn Williams (no gay relationship was indicated, however), while a succession of conveniently placed palm court orchestras obligingly played *highlights* from his scores.

Since neither my father nor Mr Williams ever show any indication of recognising any of them, not even *Florodora*, the film has caused considerable merriment for several decades *among those few of us ever able to* locate a screening on some obscure cable station in the small hours. It did, however, prove a remarkable forerunner for such later bio-musical disasters as the Cole Porter story, *Night and Day*, and the curious thing about *You Will Remember* is that nobody, not even Mr Milnes, ever does.

Yours sincerely,
SHERIDAN MORLEY,
5 Admiral Square,
Chelsea Harbour, SW10 0UU.

Greenwich redstarts

From Mr D. Gedge

Sir, As one of the local ornithologists studying black redstarts along the Thames Corridor I welcome any publicity about this remarkable species. I would, however, like to clarify one of the points made in your report today, headed "'Bombsite bird' threatens to stop work on the Dome" (see also letter, December 6).

For some two years I have been aware of two pairs of these birds which have bred on the Greenwich peninsula, well away from the Dome *site. I also know that, contrary to your* report, all three of the pairs to which it refers bred on Deptford Creek and in Charlton, either side of the site.

With adequate monitoring and understanding of any birds found, the closing of the Dome site could be easily avoided. The site as it is now, and as it will be over the next few months, will be a perfect place for black *redstarts* to breed. This will change, however, as the Dome and its surrounds are tidied up with manicured parks, new trees and buildings.

Here is an ideal opportunity for all concerned — the New Millennium Experience Company, English Part*nerships, Greenwich Council* and conservation bodies such as the London Wildlife Trust — to devise a conservation success right at the heart of the millennium celebrations, setting a *precedent for all the other sites* where black redstarts breed along the Thames Corridor.

I realise that the Dome is the media's *bête noire* at the moment; but it saddens me that you have to enlist a very charming and rare bird to have a *dig at the likes of Peter* Mandelson and Lord Falconer.

Yours sincerely,
D. GEDGE,
7 Dartmouth Grove, SE10 8AR.
January 5.

From the Chief Executive of the New Millennium Experience Company

Sir, Despite your diarist's front-page report claiming that nesting redstarts will interrupt work on the Dome, no sighting and no records of sightings on the Dome site exist with NMEC or the Environment Agency, or indeed with the London Wildlife Trust.

Is this a canard, or the first cuckoo of 1999?

Yours faithfully,
JENNIFER PAGE,
Chief Executive, New Millennium Experience Company,
110 Buckingham Palace Road,
London SW1 9SB.

New year revels — and the day after

From Mr John Hall

Sir, From our house perched at 2,000 *feet in the Italian Marches we see and* hear with delight fireworks sprouting and detonating from all the ten or so near or distant hilltop towns of our area. This merry welcome to a new year is a gesture of traditional extravagance on the part of otherwise *tight-fisted municipalities*.

After consuming a sequence of pastas, then pigs' trotters with lentils, then *dolci* with *spumante*, most of the populations, average 5,000, will be in the piazza watching the fun, feeling good. Fireworks are exhilarating!

The recently revived Venice Carnival used to end with a magnificent firework display in the Basin of St Mark's. Since the grand finale, the one event all Venetians looked forward to, was cut — who knows why — it has lost its civic spirit and is merely commercial tourism.

Watching on television the fine new year fireworks round the world, from Sydney to New York to Edinburgh, we wondered why Londoners aren't given a treat. Instead, we watched them being warned by policemen not to go to Trafalgar Square.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HALL,
Contrada Scalette 84,
62026 San Ginesio,
Macerata, Italy.
January 1.

From Ms Harriet Lyall

Sir, The afternoon of January 1, 1999, had a nightmare quality in south *Edinburgh (report, "Six cities vie to be* party capital of 1998", December 31).

Along Bruntsfield Links, the pavements were heaped high with rubbish and strewn with broken glass. Pools of vomit lay in stair entries. Young people wandered aimlessly, faces drained and blank in the sulphur glare of the street lights. I was ashamed of my city, and angry that commercialism has given such a sordid aspect to the traditional Scottish new year.

By becoming the capital of Planet Hogmanay, the city boasts it has "made" £30 million. It is a strange irony that, in order to create this wealth, it seems necessary to destroy *the very environment for whose care* and enhancement the money is presumably intended.

Yours,
HARRIET LYALL,
69 Merchiston Crescent,
Edinburgh EH10 5AQ.
January 4.

Books for schools

From Mr John F. Allen

Sir, I write to applaud your Free Books for Schools efforts and your leading article, "Collection days" (January 4).

Approaching my 70th birthday, I clearly remember walking home with great pride from primary school, clutching my first prize for reading, a *volume of Aesop's Fables. Since that* day books have been my constant companions. Encouraged by my mother to join the public library at an early age, I have been a member since the 1930s.

I believe that children should be encouraged to love books and to realise that with books on the shelf one is never without a friend. My collection exceeds 200 volumes, many *autographed by their authors, I refer* to them regularly, sometimes just to hold and admire, because my historical reference books tell me so much in my hobby as a war and aviation historian.

Keep up the good work, literacy is paramount; it holds the key to the future.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN F. ALLEN,
Arnewood, 31 Lynwood Drive,
Merley, Wimborne BH21 1UT.
January 4.

That sinking feeling

From Mr Richard Burt

Sir, With regard to Mr Frederick King's ambition (letter, January 5) to tip cutlery-free water from washing-up bowls, it was standard procedure, whilst emptying a "fanny" (ie, a large bowl) full of washing-up water down *the "gash chute" of a destroyer at sea*, to quote whilst doing so: "Tinkle, tinkle little spoon, knife and fork will follow soon."

They invariably did!

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD BURT,
20 Prestbury Crescent,
Woodmansterne,
Banstead, Surrey SM7 3PJ.
January 5.

Romance of the road

From Mr Richard Need

Sir, I have often thought that it would be fun to have roadside notices on the M25, where the meridian crosses it near Waltham Abbey to the north and Limpsfield to the south, announcing to motorists: "You are now entering the eastern (western) hemisphere."

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD NEED,
11 Hemingford Road,
Cheam, Surrey SM3 8HG.
January 2.

SOCIAL NEWS

The Queen, accompanied by the Duke of Edinburgh, will visit Lancashire and carry out engagements in connection with the 600th Anniversary of the Duchy of Lancaster on Friday, July 23.

Royal Ascot

The Royal Meeting will take place at Ascot on June 15-18, 1999. The list for applications for the Royal Enclosure is now open. Applications should be addressed to Her Majesty's Representative, The Ascot Office, St James's Palace, London SW1A 1BP.

Only personal letters of application are accepted. Existing Members should apply, as usual, before the end of April, giving dates of birth if aged between 16 and29 years. Those wishing to apply for the first time should make an application before the end of March stating the full names of those members of their family who require vouchers, together with their dates of birth if between 16 and29 years. Sponsorship forms will then be sent which should be signed by a sponsor who has been present in the Royal Enclosure for a minimum of eight years.

Overseas visitors should apply direct to their embassies in London.

In the Royal Enclosure ladies wear formal day dress with hat which covers the crown of the head. Gentlemen, morning dress with top hat or service dress.

Christening

The infant son of Mr and Mrs Peter Lee was christened James Peter Michael by the Rev Chris Mackenna at St Peter's, Hascombe, Surrey, on Sunday, December 20, 1998. The godparents are Mr David Lee, Mr David Shannon and Mrs Nicola Shannon.

Medical Officers of Schools

The annual general meeting of the Medical Officers of Schools Association will take place on Saturday, January 9, 1999, at the Chelsea and Westminster Hospital, London.

School news

Moreton Hall, Shropshire

Moreton Hall's term begins on Sunday, January 10, and ends on Friday, March 26. Half-term will be from Friday, February 12, until Sunday, February 21.

The 11+, 12+, 13+ scholarship/entrance examinations will take place on Thursday, January 28, and the Sixth Form scholarship examination will take place on Thursday, February 4. Please contact the Principal for further information (01691 773671).

Queenswood School

The Spring Term at Queenswood begins on Sunday, January 10, with Caroline Rowe as Head Girl and Lisa Collier as Deputy Head Girl. Full details of this term's music programme can be obtained from the Music Department.

Birthdays today

Miss Shirley Bassey, singer, 62; Mr David Bowie, singer and actor, 52; Mr S.G. Cameron, former chairman, Gallaher, 75; Mr Phil Hall, Editor, *News of the World*, 44; Professor Stephen Hawking, CH, FRS, theoretical physicist, 57; Lord Hollenden, 85; the Right Rev E.G. Knapp-Fisher, former Archdeacon of Westminster, 84; Professor Sir Robert May, FRS, zoologist, 63; Air Commodore Joan Metcalfe, former director, RAF Nursing Services, 76; Mr Ron Moody, actor, 75; Mrs I.M. Read, MEP, 60; Professor W.B. Reddaway, FBA, economist, 86; Sir Geoffrey Whalen, former deputy chairman, Peugeot Talbot Motor Company, 63; Professor A.G. Wilson, FBA, Vice-Chancellor, Leeds University, 60; Mr Andrew Winckler, former chief executive, Securities and Investments Board, 50.



Pay and display: a member of The Royal Armouries live interpretation team taking his place in a Leeds car park yesterday as part of a recruitment drive to attract skilled horse riders to the armouries in Leeds

Cardiff Law School

Diploma in Bar Vocational Studies

The final results of the 1997-98 Bar Vocational Course are as follows:

Very competent

Callow, David; Mills, Kristian; Makanjuola, Nicola; Warne, Francis; Felstead, Christopher; Catt, Julie; Davis, Sally-Ann; Maguire, Richard; Howard, Ian; Dracass, Timothy; Denney, Matthew; Jones, Rhys; Watkin, Tony; Contino, Marie-Claire; Harrison, Gwyn; Harrison, Karen.

Competent

Allen, Nicola; Douglas-Jones, Ben; Handley, Sarah; Ap Mihangel, Sion; Skinner, Sarah; Jones, Catherine; Chinnock, Christina; Lewis, Vaughan; O'Shea, Kevin; Morgan, Andrew; Ooi, Shu-Mei; O'Shea, Carl; Jones, Beverley; Mohammed Hashim, Haslinda; Muir, Elizabeth; Brown, Elizabeth; Hawkins, Robert; Jenkins, Susan; Griffith, Shelley; Ridgeway, Giles; Gleeson, Michael; Blake, Una; Rooney, John; Abdul Rahim, Katina; Sewell, Emma; Whitehouse, Helen; Sandford, Amanda; Gregory, Sarah; Davies, Russell; Brown, Pamela; Davies, Huw; Bethell, Reno.

Dinner

Lord Mayor

The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress entertained leading representatives of London Government at the London Governing Bodies dinner held last night at the Mansion House. The Lord Mayor and Lord Harris of Haringey, Chair of the Association of London Government, were the speakers. Among those present were:

The Chief Commoner and Members of the Court of Common Council of the Corporation of London, the Lord Mayor of Westminster, Mayors and Leaders of Greater London Boroughs, Ward Clerks of the City of London, the Sheriffs, Members of the Court of Aldermen, High Officers of the Corporation of London, Lord Brabazon of Tara, Baroness Hamwee, Lord Dixon Smith, Lord Borrie, QC, Lady Harris of Haringey, the Hon Peter Brooke, CH, MP, Sir Peter Imbert, Sir John Egan, Sir Alan Greengross, Sir Michael Pickard, Mr Nick Raynsford, MP, and Mrs Raynsford, Ms Glenda Jackson, MP, Mr Jim Dowd, MP, and Mr Tony Colman, MP.

Church news

The Right Rev Stephen Squires Venner, Suffragan Bishop of Middleton, to be Suffragan Bishop of Dover (Canterbury diocese) in succession to the Right Rev John Richard Allan Llewellin on his appointment as Bishop at Lambeth.

University news

Manchester

Appointments

Felix Johannes Budelmann, BA(London), Lecturer in Classics (Greek) in the Department of History from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Nick Crossley, BA, PhD(Sheffield), Lecturer in Sociology from September 1, 1998.

Martin Grant Evans, BA (Oxford), MSc, PhD (British Columbia), Lecturer in Physical Geography from September 1, 1998 to July 31, 2002.

Colette Anne Fagan, BA (East Anglia), MSc (London), PhD(Manchester), Lecturer in Sociology from September 1, 1998.

Alvaro Adolfo Atunes Fernandes, BSc (Rio de Janeiro), MSc (Edinburgh), PhD (Heriot Watt), Lecturer in Information Systems in the Department of Computer Science from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Enrico Franconi, PhD (Rome), Lecturer in the Department of Computer Science from October 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Anthony Hatzimoysis, MA (Ioannina), MA, PhD (Leeds), Lecturer in Philosophy in the Department of Government from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Matthias Heil, BSc (Darmstadt), PhD (Leeds), Lecturer in Applied Mathematics from September 1, 1998 to July 31, 2002.

Graeme Donald Hutcheson, BSc (Wales), PhD (Manchester), Lecturer in Research Methods in the Faculty of Education from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Nigel William John, BSc, PhD (Bath), Project Manager in Manchester Computing from July 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Sian Jones, BA, PhD(Southampton), Lecturer in Art History and Archaeology from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Todd Emery Klutz, BSc (East Tennessee State), ThM (Dallas Theological Seminary), MA (Wheaton College), PhD (Sheffield), Lecturer in New Testament Studies in the Department of Religions and Theology from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Andrew Mark Ledbury, MA, DPhil (Sussex), Lecturer in History of Art in the Department of Art History and Archaeology from September 1, 1998.

Woojin Lee, MA (Seoul), PhD (California), Lecturer in Economic Theory in the School of Economic Studies from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Ian Read McGuire, BA (Manchester), MA (Sussex), PhD (Manchester), Lecturer in Modern American Literature and Cultural Theory in the Department of English and American Studies from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Heather Mawhinney, BA, PhD (Manchester), Lecturer in French from September 1, 1998 to July 31, 2002.

John Dimitri Perivolaris, BA (London), PhD (Cambridge), Lecturer in Modern Spanish Studies from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2001.

Magnus Rattray, MSc, PhD (Manchester), Lecturer in Modelling of Living/Organic Systems in the Department of Computer Science from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Fiona Smyth, BSc (Bristol), PhD (Manchester), Lecturer in Geography from September 1, 1998.

Lampros K. Stergioulas, BSc (Athens), MSc, PhD (Liverpool), Lecturer in Engineering from October 1, 1998 to July 31, 2002.

Maiken Umbach, MA, PhD(Cambridge), Lecturer in History from September 1, 1998 to July 31, 2002.

David William Edward Willis, BA, MPhil, DPhil (Oxford), Lecturer in Historical Linguistics in the Department of Linguistics from September 1, 1998, to July 31, 2002.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Philip Astley, theatre manager, Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1742; Wilkie Collins, novelist, London, 1824; Hans von Bulow, pianist and conductor, Dresden, 1830; Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, painter, The Netherlands, 1836; Solomon Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Ceylon 1956-59, Colombo, 1899; Elvis Presley, singer and actor, Tupelo, Mississippi, 1935; Dennis Wheatley, novelist, 1897.

DEATHS: Edgar, King of Scotland reigned 1097-1107, Edinburgh Castle, 1107; Giotto, painter, Florence, 1337; Galileo Galilei, mathematician and astronomer, Arcetri, Italy, 1642; Eli Whitney, pioneer of the cotton gin, New Haven, Connecticut, 1825; Robert Stephenson Baden-Powell, 1st Baron Baden-Powell, general and founder of the Boy Scouts, Nyeri, Kenya, 1941; Richard Tauber, tenor, London, 1948; Chou En-lai, Premier of the People's Republic of China 1949-76, Peking, 1976.

Rationing of butter, bacon and sugar began, 1940.

Leverhulme Trust

The Leverhulme Trustees agreed at their recent meeting to award the following grants to institutions:

Research: Law, politics, international relations

University of Strathclyde, Professor R Rose, £59,500 over 2 years Coping with organizations: networks of Russian social capital

University of Hull, Mr P J Cowley, Lord Norton, £39,920 over 3 years, New Labour, new rebels? Voting in the 1997 Parliament

Department of Geography, University of Cambridge, Dr G Smith; School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London University, Dr A Wilson, £38,860 over 9 months, The Russian diasporas in N E Estonia, E Ukraine & N Kazakhstan.

Research: Social sciences (including anthropology, geography, social psychology)

University of Edinburgh, Professor F Bechhofer (extension), Professor D McCrone, Mr R Kiely, £21,230 over 6 months, Berwick on Tweed: local & national identity on an ambiguous border.

De Montfort University, Professor W Vamplew, £45,070 over 2 years, Sport & alcohol: an analysis of the historical relationship

University of Lancaster Dr M Hamilton, £28,730 over 12 months, Visual representations of literacy in the British Press

University of Exeter Professor A M Williams, £61,900 over 2 years, International mobility & transition in Central Europe.

rResearch: Basic sciences

University of Sheffield, Professor D J Read, Dr J D Scholes, Dr S A Rolfe, £105,930 over 3 years, The molecular basis of nutrient exchange in mycorrhizal symbioses

University of Wales College of Cardiff, Dr B E Richardson, £41,790 over 2 years, Acoustical parameters for characterisation of the function of classical guitars.

University of Nottingham, Dr R J Wheatley, £73,570 over 3 years, Hydrogen bonding & chloride ion solvation in water clusters

Department of Chemistry, University of Cambridge, Dr T Rayment, Dr C Abell, £87,170 over 3 years, Molecular writing by atomic force microscopy

University of Durham, Professor F R Stephenson, £72,260 over 3 years, Observation & theory in early astronomy

University of Keele, Professor A J Willmott, University of Manchester, Professor I D Abrahams, £80,730 over 3 years, Rossby wave - mean flow - topography interactions in the Southern Ocean

University of York, Dr A E Douglas, £83,250 over 3 years, Signal-mediated nutrient release by symbiotic algae in animals

Department of Earth Sciences, University of Cambridge, Professor S Conway Morris, £91,370 over 3 years, An integrated approach to the origin & early evolution of the arthropods

Cheltenham & Gloucester College of Higher Education, Dr H Rollinson, £9,900 over 5 months, Metamorphism of the Isua Greenstone Belt.

University of Manchester, Professor J H Wearden, £47,780 over 2 years, Arousal & the rate of psychological time.

University of Aberdeen, Dr N Reissland, £20,620 over 12 months, The development of surprise in 2- to 10-month-old infants

Open University, Professor V A Lewis, University of Warwick, Dr G Collis, Open University, Dr S Norgate, £15,050 over 6 months, Blind children's understanding of familiar space: a pilot study of new methods

University of Manchester, Dr R J Reece, £104,950 over 3 years, Switching between repressed & activated gene transcription.

University of Edinburgh, Dr M Blaxter, Professor D Saunders, £74,760 over 2 years, Circadian & ultradian rhythms in the nematode Caenorhabditis elegans

University of Bristol, Dr M Viney, £14,610 over 6 months, The genetics of phenotypic plasticity in Caenorhabditis elegans.

Research: Applied sciences (including architecture)

University of Sussex, Dr T J C Beebee, £90,530 over 3 years, Does genetic diversity affect population viability?.

Research: Humanities

University of Lancaster, Professor P Summerfield, £35,160 over 1.25 years, The gendering of British National Defence 1939-1945: the case of the Home Guard.

Faculty of History, University of Cambridge, Professor J Hatcher, £14,950 over 7 months, Life expectancy in Durham Cathedral Priory in the later Middle Ages

Queen Mary and Westfield College, Dr J J Blackford, £77,710 over 2 years, Fungal spores in palaeoecology: determining the earliest human impact.

University of St Andrews, Professor R A Lodge, £23,100 over 12 months, Representations of the Paris urban vernacular in the 17th-18th centuries.

Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Cambridge, Dr G Khan, £83,500 over 3 years, The Hebrew grammatical thought of the Karaite Abu al-Faraj Harun.

University of Glasgow, Dr J Stuart-Smith, Dr F Tweedie, £19,940 over 12 months, Accent change in Glaswegian: a sociophonetic investigation

University of Wolverhampton, Professor J Benson, Dr D Galasinski, £50,500 over 2 years, Middle age in late 20th-century Britain.

Research: Fine arts

National Museums & Galleries on Merseyside, Miss L Wood, £25,720 over 12 months (extension), Seating & upholstered furniture: a study of the Lady Lever collection.

TOTAL GRANTS: £1,645,410

Forthcoming marriages

Mr M.A. Bean and Miss G.A. Parker

The engagement is announced between Matthew, elder son of Mr and Mrs Victor Bean, of Boroughbridge, North Yorkshire, and Georgina, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Brian Parker, of Lostock, Lancashire.

Mr D.R. Bolgar and Miss R.M. Evans

The engagement is announced between Daniel, younger son of Mr and Mrs Peter Bolgar, of Felsted, Essex, and Rebecca, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Evans, of St Brides, Pembrokeshire.

Mr A.C. Brebbia and Miss A.S. Baird

The engagement is announced between Alexander, son of Professor and Mrs Carlos Brebbia, of Burley, Hampshire, and Alix, elder daughter of Mr Peter Baird, of Radnage, Buckinghamshire, and Mrs Piers Nicholson, of Epsom, Surrey.

Mr M.R. Cragg and Miss S.J. Lund

The engagement is announced between Michael, son of Mr E. Cragg and Mrs S. Cragg, of Harare, Zimbabwe, and Sonia, daughter of Dr and Mrs Charles Lund, of Ponteland, Northumberland.

Mr M.W.T. Crosby and Miss A-V. Giblin

The engagement is announced between Michael, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Crosby, of South Ascot, Berkshire, and Anna-Victoria, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Terence Giblin, of Old Basing, Hampshire.

Dr A.A.C. Dow and Miss F.J. Gibbs

The engagement is announced between Alasdair, eldest son of Dr and Mrs Iain Dow, of Ham Green, Worcestershire, and Fiona, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Gibbs, of East Horsley, Surrey.

Mr M.P. Hammond and Miss S.L. Hampel

The engagement is announced between Mark Patrick, son of the late Mr Mark Leonard Hammond and the late Dr Margaret Elizabeth Hammond, of Worsley, Manchester, and Samara Louise, daughter of Mr Peter Hampel, of Norwich, Norfolk, and Mrs Jan Zuckerman, of Beccles, Suffolk.

Mr D.R. Jennings and Miss M.B. McGinley

The engagement is announced between David, son of Roy and Julia Jennings, of Sidlesham, West Sussex, and Micaela, daughter of Michael and Helen McGinley, of Derry, Northern Ireland.

Mr D. Keswick and Miss S.M. Shaw

The engagement is announced between David, eldest son of Sir Chips and Lady Sarah Keswick, of Ilchester Place, London, and Samantha, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Peter Shaw, of Huish Champflower, Somerset.

Mr M.C. Lees-Jones and Miss E.J. Foster

The engagement is announced between Michael Christopher, son of Mr and Mrs Christopher Lees-Jones, of Holmes Chapel, Cheshire, and Eleanor Jayne, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs David Foster, of Heald Green, Cheshire.

Mr J.S. Mead and Miss M.C. Gilroy

The engagement is announced between Jeremy, younger son of the late Dr Michael Mead and of Mrs Mead, of Southsea, Hampshire, and Margaret, daughter of Mr and Mrs Angus Gilroy, of Billingshurst, West Sussex.

Mr G.B. Pearman and Miss L.C. Riley

The engagement is announced between Giles, younger son of Mrs Pearman and the late Mr Paul Pearman, formerly of Caversham, Reading, and Lucy, younger daughter of Mr John Riley, of Dewlish, Dorset, and Mrs Jill Dams, of Sherborne, Dorset.

Mr M.M.A. Simpson and Miss E.F. Crichton

The engagement is announced between Michael, only son of the late Mr C. David Simpson and of Mrs Malcolm Dix, of Edinburgh, and Emily, eldest daughter of Mr Neil J. Crichton, of Edinburgh, and Mrs Theresa Crichton, of Co Clare, Eire.

Mr R.S. Carver and Miss F.H. London

The engagement is announced between Ralph Carver, of Haslemere, Surrey, and Frances Loudon, recently of Kew, London.

Mr D.B.M. Ellison and Miss K.S. Jason

The engagement is announced between Daniel, elder son of Mr and Mrs Franklyn Ellison, and Katy, daughter of Mr and Mrs John Jason.

Mr R.A.R. Middle and Miss S. Iwamoto

The engagement is announced between Rupert, eldest son of Dr and Mrs G.B. Middle, of Chesham, Buckinghamshire, and Sachiko, daughter of Mr and Mrs Y. Iwamoto, of Hiroshima, Japan.

Dr C.I. Parkinson and Miss K.M. Smith

The engagement is announced between Christopher, son of Dr and Mrs Michael Parkinson, of Moulton, Northampton, and Katherine, daughter of Mr and Mrs Stephen Smith, of Prosser, Washington State, USA.

Mr R.I.D. Pilkington and Miss A.M.W. Ormsby

The engagement is announced between Rory, son of Mr and Mrs Ian Pilkington, of Mortimer, Berkshire, and Alexandra, younger daughter of Mr Lyster Ormsby and Mrs Penny Ormsby, both of New South Wales, Australia.

Mr A.M. Plows and Miss C.L. Pegg

The engagement is announced between Alexander, son of Dr Graham Plows, of Cambridge, and Mrs Elisabeth Jonnson-Beach, of Holywood, Co Down, and Camilla, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Basil Pegg, of Ovington, Hampshire.

Mr R. Rice and Miss S.E. Wilde

The engagement is announced between Richard, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Douglas Rice, of Tiverton, Devon, and Samantha, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs Graham Wilde, of Calgary, Canada.

Mr T.H.K. Salvesen and Miss A-M. O'Neill

The engagement is announced between Thomas Harald Kemp, son of Mr and Mrs Robin Salvesen, of Haddington, East Lothian, and Anne-Marie, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Sean O'Neill, of Clonmel, County Tipperary.

Mr T.M. Scurfield and Miss M.L. Hamilton

The engagement is announced between Titus, son of Mr and Mrs David Scurfield, of Petersfield, Hampshire, and Marie, daughter of Mr and Mrs Tom Hamilton, of Skelmorlie, Ayrshire.

Mr J.K. Smith and Miss K.E.G. Reynolds

The engagement is announced between Jonathan Kirk, son of Mr and Mrs Thomas Smith, of Dore, Sheffield, and Katherine Elizabeth Gillow, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Richard Reynolds, of Carnforth, Lancashire.

Mr S.R. Stevens and Miss S.H. Webster

The engagement is announced between Simon, son of Mr and Mrs Peter Stevens, of Alton, Hampshire, and Sally, daughter of Mr John Webster, of Crawley, Sussex, and Mrs Joyce Woods, of Ovington, Norfolk.

Mr J.R.A. Stocker and Miss K.R. Fitzgerald

The engagement is announced between James, elder son of Colonel and Mrs Simon Stocker, of Bishopstrow, Wiltshire, and Kirstin, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs William P. Fitzgerald, of Chicago, USA.

Mr D.M. Thompson and Miss A.J. Mackenzie

The engagement is announced between Darren, son of Mr and Mrs Malcolm Thompson, of Raby, Cheshire, and Anita, daughter of Mr and Mrs Keith Mackenzie, of Prestbury, Cheshire.

Mr R.C.G. Weaver and Miss H.L. Chadwick

The engagement is announced between Richard, eldest son of Mr and Mrs Leonard Weaver, of Oxshott, Surrey, and Hannah, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Chadwick, of Wimbledon, London.

PERSONAL

Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things: this is known in all the earth. Isaiah 12.1 (NRSV).

BIRTHS

ADAM - On January 2nd to Kristine (née Lunn) and Jamie, a son.

ADDISON - on January 3rd 1999 to Ellen (née Tuck) and Hugh, a daughter.

COWNE - On 29th December 1998, at home in Nottingham, to Jane (née Carter) and Mark, a beautiful daughter Harriet, a sister for Thomas, William and Edward.

FROST - On December 5th at The Portland Hospital to Juli (née Preston) and Robert, a son, Alexander and a daughter, Ashley.

GABBERTAS - On Wednesday December 30th to Emma (née Scarborough) and Richard, a daughter, Rose, a sister for Freddie and Minna.

GAISFORD - On January 6th 1999 to Charlotte (née Conyngham Greene) wife of Thomas, a son.

GORDON - On December 28th to Camilla and Robert, a daughter Georgina.

HANKINS - On 5th January 1999 to Shelley-Anne (née Simonds) and Simon a beautiful daughter Tahllya Simone, a sister for Freyja and Catherine.

BIRTHS

KENNEDY-MILNE - On December 31st at The Portland Hospital to Karen (née Morris) and William, a loved and welcome son, Angus Alan. Avise La Fin.

LEMMENS - On January 3rd at The Portland Hospital to Barbara (née Brouwers) and Ron, a son, Oscar, a brother for Max and Sophie.

LYDE - On 4th January 1999, at Chelsea & Westminster Hospital, to Jane (née Godsal) and Toby, a son (Max Alexander).

McBRIDE - On January 6th at Farnborough Hospital, Kent, to Susie Hill and John McBride, a daughter Francesca Rebecca, a sister for Tobias.

MISTRY - On 30th December 1998 at Peterborough Maternity, to Anju (née Nanda) and Harshad, a darling daughter, Radha Kaya, a much wanted sister for Zuleikha Maya.

RENSHALL - See Storey.

SPOWERS - On December 22nd, in Sydney, to Celeste (née Kershaw) and Adam, a daughter, Beatrice Lily, a sister for Ophelia and Eloise.

STOREY - On 22nd December 1998 to Susan (née Renshall) and Andrew, a daughter, Harriet Imogen.

STURGES - On January 5th to Susan (née Watt) and Hugh, Katharine Freya, a beautiful daughter and a beautiful sister for Harry.

BIRTHS

THURSTON - On January 5th at The Portland Hospital to Renee and Jonathan, a daughter Elizabeth, a sister for Amy and Tomas.

TURNER - On 18th December 1998 at Gloucester Royal Hospital to Bridget (née Nolan) and Jeremy, a daughter, Alice Belinda, a sister for Hannah and Molly.

DEATHS

AMBROSE - Percy Scotting, former Town Planner of Loughton and Essex, passed away 31st December 1998, aged 91. Devoted father of David and Hilary and beloved grandfather of Sarah, Robert and John. Family flowers only. Donations in aid of St. Joseph's Hospital Roma Lesotho, to: Warriner & Sons, 32 Church Hill, Loughton, Essex IG10 1LA

AMPHLETT - Miss Anna. Solicitor: see Grieves.

ANDERSON - Edith Evelyn, following a courageous recovery, died suddenly at Bromley Hospital in the early hours of Boxing Day morning, aged 88. Dearly loved mother of Evelyn Braybrooke and Pauline Anderson (deceased) and grandmother of Susan Anderson, Peter and Nicholas Braybrooke. Family funeral at Eltham Crematorium at 12.15pm on Wednesday 13th January.

BUTCHER - Donald John LIB of Stamford, Lincolnshire, 3rd January 1999, peacefully after a long illness. Beloved husband of Fay. Much loved father, and grandfather. R.I.P.

DEATHS

BALFOUR OF INCHRYE - (née Profumo) Maina, died peacefully in a London hospital on Wednesday January 6th, 1999. Much loved mother of Mary Ann and grandmother of Jamie, Nicholas, Benjamin, Alexander and Christopher. Funeral at St Pauls Knightsbridge on Wednesday January 20th at 2pm. No flowers but any donations please to the Stroke Association, Pembridge Square, London W2.

CAIRNS - On January 6th 1999, suddenly at Bogra, Kirkcudbright, Alexander Cunningham Cairns. Dearly loved husband of the late Audrey and father of Robert (Deceased) and Virginia. Funeral Service at Greyfriars Church, Kirkcudbright, on Wednesday 13th January at 11.00am and thereafter to Masonhill Crematorium, by Ayr at 1.30pm. Family flowers only please.

CARLYON - Thomas Alfred Spry on January 5th, 1999 at Colan, Cornwall aged 75. Beloved husband of Elspeth, father of William and Nicola. Funeral at St. Columb Minor Church, Tuesday January 12th, 2.30pm followed by private burial. Donations if desired to: R.A.B.I. or Treliske Renal Unit c/o R Bray, Bridgend Wadebridge.

CLAY - On January 5th 1999, peacefully at his home in Woodbridge, Jim, widower of Angela. Funeral Service at Ipswich Crematorium, West Chapel on Monday January 18th at 11.45am. Flowers or donations made payable to The Woodland Trust c/o Tony Browns Funeral Service, Saxmundham, Suffolk.

DUNPHIE - On 7th January 1999, Major General Sir Charles Dunphie CB CBE DSO, very dearly loved husband of Susan, and for 47 years of the late Eileen. Cremation private. Thanksgiving service to be announced later. No flowers. Donations if desired to Army Benevolent Fund c/o Harold Miles, Funeral Directors, South Cadbury, Yeovil BA22 7ES.

ELLIOTT - Raymond Arthur on 5th January in his 90th year. Beloved husband of Margot, devoted father of Alison and Malcolm, loving father-in-law to Dotty and adored "Grand Rayds" to Duncan, Kirsten and Sophie. Funeral at St Mary's Church, Thundridge, Ware on Friday 15th January at 11.30 am. Family flowers only but donations in lieu to Helen House (Childrens Hospice) 37 Leopold Street, Oxford OX4 1QT.

FARRER - Suddenly, at home, on January 5th Henry Edward Stanton aged 75, a venerated member of the wine trade, husband of Frances, father of Caroline, John and Richard, and grandfather of Rosie, Alice, Harry and Freddie. He will be greatly missed. No mourning please and family flowers only. All his friends are welcome to join the family at a short service which will be held at Oakley Wood Crematorium near Leamington Spa at 2pm on Tuesday 15th January and do come and join us for a drink to celebrate Henry's life afterwards at Northcote House, 23 Sheep Street, Shipston-on-Stour. Any donations would be gratefully received by Myton Hospice, Warwick.

FORSDICK - Brian Charles died on 23rd December after a short illness. Will be sadly missed by his daughter Diana, son-in-law Richard and grandchildren Christopher, Jonathan and Nicholas. A Funeral Service will be held at Holland Road Baptist Church, Hove on Monday January 11th at 12 o'clock.

GRIEVES - Anna Lloyd (née Amphlett), Solicitor and past member of LCC and GLC, aged 97 on Wednesday 6th January 1999. Loved and missed by children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and all at Amphlett Lissimore Solicitors. Funeral at West Norwood Crematorium, Thursday 14th January 4.00pm. Family flowers only please.

HALFORD - Major-General Michael Charles Kirkpatrick, DSO, OBE, BA (Cantab), DL (retired), formerly of the York and Lancaster Regiment died on 4th January 1999, aged 84, after a short illness. Dearly loved husband of Pamela and much loved father and friend of David, Peter and Jeremy. Family cremation. No flowers by request. If desired, remembrance by donation to The Royal British Legion.

HAYWARD - Richard Cecil (Herch), suddenly on January 5th aged 84. Much loved husband of Enid (Struthers) and of the late Stella, and father of Sarah and Venetia. Service of Thanksgiving for his life at 2.30pm on Wednesday 13th January at the church of St Mary's, Maiden Newton, Dorset. No flowers, but donations, if desired, to The Joseph Weld Hospice, Dorchester, c/o A J Wakely & Sons, 91 East Street, Bridport, Dorset.

HAYWARD - On January 6th, peacefully, Nancy (née Maule) aged 96 years, dearly loved wife of the late Lt. Col. Stuart Hayward RTR and much loved mother of Ann, John and Penny, and adored grandmother and great-grandmother. Private Cremation, Thanksgiving Service on Friday 15th January at St. Andrew's Church Hasketon, at 2.30pm. No flowers please, donations if desired for the Royal Tank Regiment Benevolent Fund to E.B. Button & Sons Ltd., 24 St. John's Street, Woodbridge Suffolk IP12 1EB.

JOHNSTON - Madeleine, wife of Patrick. Died peacefully on January 7th, 1999. Much loved mother of James and Camilla and grandmother of Justina, Sophie, Joanna and Alexa. The Funeral Service will take place at noon on Friday, January 15th, 1999 at the Putney Vale Crematorium, Stag Lane, London SW15, for family and close friends. Afterwards at 2 Melrose Road, London SW18. No flowers but donations, if desired, to DGAA, Vicarage Gate House, Vicarage Gate, Kensington, London W8.

JONES - Dr Thomas Gwilym, scientist, husband of Nansi and father of Stephen and Kendall, died suddenly at home, 31st December 1998, aged 81. Funeral at Landican Crematorium, Birkenhead, 10:30 Wednesday 13th January; with memorial service at a later date in New Quay, Cardiganshire. No flowers, please, but donations to Multiple Sclerosis Society, 25 Effie Road, London SW6.

LEMON - Mark. Died at home in London on January 5th 1999, aged 88. Will be sadly missed by relatives and friends. Enquiries Tel: 01737 814732.

MAUND - Constance (née Iredale), widow of Rear Admiral L.E.H. Maund, died as a result of a tragic accident on January 4th on her farm in Fittleworth. Funeral at the Parish Church, Fittleworth, on Friday January 15th at 2.30pm. No flowers by request.

McDOWALL - Margaret Teresa on January 7th at Epsom Hospital quietly and peacefully after a long and very brave and courageous fight against cancer. Greatly adored wife of Jack for 48 years and much loved by her children Moira and John, by daughter-in-law Sarah and by Rose and Isabella, to whom she was Grannie Margaret. She will be sadly missed by so many friends. Funeral private, at her request, but donations in her memory if desired to The Princess Alice Hospice West End Lane, Esher.

MURRAY - Richard Thomas Francis Malcolm, died at St. Andrew's Hospital, Northampton, on 3rd January, 1999, aged 72. Dearly loved younger brother of Antony and Christopher. There will be a Funeral Service at All Saints' Church, Oaksey, near Malmesbury, Wiltshire on 27th January, 11.30am. Family flowers only. Donations to Mencap or to St. Andrew's Hospital.

ROBERTSON - Don. On Tuesday 5th January 1999 of Bembridge, Isle of Wight, beloved husband of the late Ella and much loved father of Jane, died peacefully in his sleep. Funeral Service at Holy Trinity Church, Bembridge, I.W. at 2.00pm on Thursday 14th January 1999 followed by cremation. Family flowers only but donations in lieu for the RNLI and all enquiries may be sent to Weaver Bros. Ltd, Bembridge, I.W. (01983) 872598.

ROBINSON - Hilda. On December 6th 1998, peacefully at Elliscombe House, Wincanton, Somerset. All friends welcome to Service of Thanksgiving at Trinity Church, Conduit Road, Abingdon on Saturday January 23rd at 12 noon. No flowers please, donations if desired for Helen House Childrens' Hospice c/o Edward Carter (FD), 107 South Avenue, Abingdon, OX14 1QS.

SNOW - Joan, widow of the late Rt. Rev. George Snow and much loved mother of Thomas, Jonathan and Nicholas. Born 27th August 1911, died peacefully 6th January 1999. Funeral private, no flowers, donations please to the Alzheimer's Disease Society, 10 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1PH.

SPRIGGE - Anne (neé Purnell - Edwards) of Iver, Bucks suddenly and peacefully on 31st December 1998 much loved widow of Joe and mother of John and William. Cremation at Slough Crematorium on Friday 15th January 1999 at 12 noon. No flowers please, donations if desired to The Samaritans or Age Concern C/O Quilims FS, West Kirby, Wirral, L48 4EF, tel 0151 625 5274.

STEYN - Michael Eugene, died peacefully at home on January 3rd 1999, aged 87 years, after a courageous 8 year fight against cancer. Funeral service to be held on Friday January 15th at 2 pm at Mortlake Crematorium. Family flowers only please, but donations can be made to Friends of the Earth or Macmillan Nurses, c/o W Steyn, 7 Magnolia Wharf, London W4 3NY.

THOMPSON - Len, after 25 years service with The Times Newspaper and 13 years happy retirement. Died suddenly on 3rd January 1999. Funeral service at Breakspear Crematorium, Ruislip on Wednesday 13th January at 3.15pm (West Chapel). Flowers or donations if desired to Moorfields Eye Hospital, c/o T A Ellement & Son Ltd, 21 Bridge Street, Pinner, Middlesex HA5 3HR.

TUCKER - Boyana, beloved mother of Ian, Marc, Petra, widow of Trevor (Tommy) passed away 31st December 1998. Sadly missed by her three children, close family members and friends. Cremation 11th January 1999 at Great Yarmouth, followed by a celebration of her life at St. Edmunds Church, Southwold Suffolk at 2.30pm. All friends welcome. For flowers etc. contact Tel:01603 628334.

WILSON - Sir Reginald Holmes, aged 93, peacefully at home on Friday 1st January. Deeply loved husband of Sonia, father of Roderick and Esther. Funeral Service, 11.30am on Saturday 16th January at Golder's Green Crematorium. No flowers please, but donations if desired to the Brompton Hospital.

هكذا من الأصل

OBITUARIES

HENRIETTA MORAES

Henrietta Moraes, artists' model, died on January 6 aged 67. She was born in India in 1931.

A bohemian beauty, Henrietta Moraes had the luxuriant looks which seduced the imaginations of Britain's greatest postwar painters. She was the muse of Francis Bacon, the lover of Lucian Freud. Her face has been admired by millions ever since she first posed.

As queen of London's high-spirited Soho set, Moraes led a louche, romantic life, untrammelled by discipline or domesticity. Soho in the 1950s was an artistic oasis, a liberated haven in a drab postwar world. Moraes made its unconventional characters her drinking companions and friends. The tales of their exploits and their alcoholic adventures were to take on the glamour of contemporary legend.

Moraes would often talk of the time that Bacon wanted to paint her and, because he only worked from photographs, sent John Deakin round with camera and film. "Spread your legs wider," Deakin kept insisting, as Moraes sprawled lasciviously on the rumpled bed. Later Moraes was to catch him at the bar of the now fabled French, selling the pictures to sailors for a few shillings apiece.

The painting which Bacon did at this time is now famous as *Lying Girl with Hypodermic Syringe*. Moraes is portrayed, her outflung arm pinned to the mattress with a drug-taker's needle. Bacon would never explain why he added this particular detail, but it had a sinister prescience. As she grew older, the heavy drinking Moraes turned increasingly to the consolations of intravenous drugs.

What had begun as a wild and glamorous party slowly turned sour. And at the end Moraes stood alone, a lingering presence among the old fag ends and broken glasses of a shattered circle. "Darling you are beautiful and you always will be," Lucian Freud had once told her. But age and her heavy drinking took their inevitable toll on her looks.

Henrietta Moraes was born Audrey Wendy Abbott in Simla, India, the daughter of "Ginger", a serviceman in the Indian airforce who disappeared, never to be seen again, between her conception and birth. Her 17-year-old mother could not cope, so Moraes was brought up from the age of 18 months in London by a severe and increasingly sadistic grandmother, who took a vicious pleasure in tormenting her charge, regularly beating her with leather trunk straps. One of the reasons why she later turned to drink and drugs, Moraes said, was to escape the pain and shame of this early cruelty. But her harsh upbringing also instilled in her the wilfulness and fierce independence which was to give force to her exotically idiosyncratic life.

As soon as she was old enough, Moraes was boarded out to stark convent schools and not until she was 11 did she return to live with her mother, who was by then working as a nanny in a country house near Oundle. Moraes was sent to Queen Anne's School in Caversham where, despite rebellious high spirits, she read voraciously and did well in her exams.

At 18 she was packed off to a South Kensington secretarial college but, detesting the dreary routine of office life, she walked out into the street one morning and finding a phone box rang up every art school she could think of to offer her services as a life model.

At this time she met Michael Law, an out of work film maker, 15 years her senior, and, moving together into a little house in Dean Street, she was introduced to Soho for the first time. "I'd found my home," she later said. She lived a carefree vagabond life among its myriad drinking dens. "We'd wake up and drift down to Torino's, and then over to the French when it opened at eleven, then over to the Colony when Gaston closed at three. Or maybe, if I was lucky, I'd get taken to Wheeler's for lunch. Then back to



Henrietta Moraes: the face that fascinated Francis Bacon

Gaston's till closing." Later she would be off to the Gargoyle, drinking almost until dawn, returning as the water cart sloshed through the streets.

With her sultry beauty and tomboyish charm, she struck up quick friendships. "I'd go anywhere and do anything at any time. I'd rattle around Soho and they found me very easy to put up with." Lucian Freud mesmerised her and, having consummated their relationship on the edge of a precarious kitchen sink, she became his lover before, exasperated by his infidelities, eventually returning to Law and marrying him in Rome.

This marriage, however, foundered when she met Norman Bowler, the body-building lover of the painter John Minton, with whom she was to live an erratic, heavy-drinking life and have two children, before leaving him too.

John Minton died and bequeathed Moraes his house in Apollo Place, Chelsea, where she set up home, eking out a living in a small advertising agency while her children were cared for by a nanny. She counted these years as among the happiest and most settled in her life.

In 1961 she was married, for a third time, to Dom Moraes, an Indian poet. It was he who named her Henrietta. But again the marriage was shortlived. "I was too neurotic for his delicate nervous system, and we both drank too much," said Moraes. One day he went out for a packet of cigarettes and never returned.

Disturbed by the breakup, Moraes awoke one morning and, deciding that she didn't want to spend the rest of her days dreaming up ways to sell consumer tat, stayed in bed with a supply of whisky. Unanchored, she fell prey to drugs and, having squandered what little money she had, she had to sell her home and move to Battersea, where, in a state of amphetamined psychosis, she briefly made a living as a cat burglar.

"There was a breathless excitement to be had from entering another's stronghold," she said. "I adored the danger. It was like living in a Marvel comic." Inevitably she was caught — by a man in striped pyjamas who chased her down the street calling "Stop Thief!" — and a brief period in the hospital wing of Holloway ensued. "The place was rather like my first convent," she laconically observed.

Holloway weaned her off drugs only temporarily. Soon after her release she was back on the streets scoring Methedrine and, as her life became increasingly unmanageable, her children were taken into care by a friend. By 1966 she had discovered acid and its hallucinatory escapism. She was the first to admit that she had always refused to grow up, that life to her was always one long party.

Drifting loose of her old Soho world she fell in with a feckless bunch of aristocrats, with whom she eventually set off on a shambolic four-year journey across Britain in a gypsy caravan, camping in laybys, wintering in the grounds of stately homes, before ending up in a commune on the Welsh borders.

But when, in the early 1970s, the group of hippy friends broke up, she went first to Hay-on-Wye to work in a bookshop, and then to the home of the singer, Marianne Faithfull, as a companion and home help. She was still drinking heavily when, driven by a voice in her head, she uprooted again for Leixlip Castle in County Kildare to house sit and exercise the horses of an old friend.

She returned to London in the late 1980s, but by then her intemperate lifestyle was beginning to take its toll. In 1989 she was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver.

Alcoholics Anonymous became Moraes' lifeline in later years. And as part of her recovery she wrote her autobiography, *Henrietta*, published in 1994. She lived in a single room, with her dachshund for company, and although she would occasionally visit her former friends, most members of the old Soho circle were either dead or dispersed. Lucian Freud no longer wanted to see her. But she was posing for the artist Maggi Hambling in the weeks before her death. And she kept her sense of humour, dying as she joked on the telephone with her doctor.

The last glimpse she had of her wild youth was in John Maybury's film biography of Francis Bacon, released last year. Derek Jacobi was excellent as Bacon, she thought, but she did not like Anabel Brooks's portrayal of herself. "She's very quiet in the film, and I was always a chatterbox," she said.

Henrietta Moraes is survived by her son, Joshua and daughter Caroline.

KENNETH DUKE

Kenneth Duke, historian, died on December 8 aged 80. He was born on August 31, 1918.

KENNETH DUKE'S services to his country and to the study of history went largely unrewarded, yet he deserved much of the credit for the success of the important joint project by English, American and French historians to publish the records of the German Foreign Ministry from the Treaty of Versailles to the surrender of the Nazi State in 1945. Without his skill in organising and supervising the handling of documents, the vast enterprise would have foundered beneath the mass of material — 400 tons or more — that passed into the hands of the three Western Allies. The system of record cards he devised could with profit be copied by any young researcher in government archives.

Duke displayed his gifts by developing, in the years before computers, a foolproof system for processing the many thousands of German documents. He saw to it that they were all screened, recorded and selected for publication by pairs of historians drawn from the three nations involved. After consultation with senior historians in London, Paris and Washington, they were then edited in detail and published in the five series of *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945.*

With historians drawn from three different traditions, and subject to differing political pressures, there were inevitable conflicts. Duke, as the leading British historian in charge of the captured documents, found himself assuming managerial responsibilities, and revealed in the process considerable skills as a diplomat. His obvious integrity was accepted by all. His manner was that of a typically taciturn, pipe-smoking Englishman. As such, he might occasionally provoke frustration in his French or American colleagues, but he never failed finally to resolve any crisis or disagreement that arose.



Kenneth Duke: historian of Germany's foreign policy

Kenneth Duke was educated at Trent College, Nottingham, and St Peter's Hall, Oxford, where he read German. Called up on the outbreak of war, he took a commission in the Royal Artillery and was posted to India. There, in Burma in 1942, he met the girl who was to become his wife. He was put under considerable pressure to break off their relationship, but with that determination which was his strongest mark, he married her, only to find himself immediately posted back home. She followed him to Britain and they remained happily married until her death in 1983.

On demobilisation in 1946, he was recruited as a German speaker to the British team preparing to prosecute the survivors of Hitler's entourage. His work in preparing the case against the German Navy and against Admirals Raeder and Dönitz was so impeccable as to earn the personal thanks of Sir David Maxwell-Fyfe, the senior British prosecuting counsel. When the tripartite project of screening and publishing the captured German documents on foreign policy was initiated in Berlin, he was the obvious choice to lead the British team. And when, in 1948, the entire project was evacuated from beleaguered Berlin to Whaddon Hall, a small country house near Bletchley, it was natural that he should become manager of the Foreign Office-sponsored project as well.

In 1959, after the publication of series C and D of the documents, covering the years 1933 to 1941, the three sponsoring governments yielded to pressure from Bonn. The documents were returned to West German custody and the project, now with West German participation, moved to Bonn. By then, the selection and recording of the documents for all five series was largely complete, and all the documents for the years 1864 to 1918 had been put on microfilm.

Duke, therefore, resigned and moved from the Foreign Office research department into the Diplomatic Service. He made a special study of the Soviet economic system in Eastern Europe, in the course of which he spent three years in Budapest and three in Belgrade, before being appointed to Berlin as First Secretary to the newly opened British Embassy to the German Democratic Republic in 1973.

On his retirement he turned back to the field that he had made his own at Whaddon. He played an important part in the review of German documents, which put an end to the view, maintained by some revision-minded historians, that the Holocaust had taken place without Hitler's knowlege, let alone on his instructions.

Historians of the Nuremberg Trials who sought Duke's advice found him generous with his knowledge and expertise. He also wrote a small number of learned and well-informed academic articles on German relations with South East Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, and lectured on the discovery of the Ribbentrop papers, in which he had been personally involved.

He is survived by a brother and sister.

MICHEL PETRUCCIANI

Michel Petrucciani, jazz pianist, died of a lung infection in New York on January 6 aged 36. He was born in Orange, France, on December 28, 1962.

AGAINST seemingly impossible odds, Michel Petrucciani became one of the most accomplished jazz pianists in the world. Despite suffering from the bone disease osteogenis imperfecta, which left him with weak bones, a diminutive stature, and constant minor ailments, he wholeheartedly embraced the life of an international touring musician.

He was the first French musician to be signed to the New York-based Blue Note label, and made dozens of recordings with many distinguished colleagues, including the saxophonists Charles Lloyd and Joe Lovano, the drummers Ray Haynes and Tony Williams, and the bassists Dave Holland and J-F Jenny Clarke. Petrucciani's technical mastery of the keyboard led to comparisons with Oscar Peterson and Bill Evans, but he developed a truly individual style, immediately identifiable by the clarity and power of his touch, and the romantic melodic qualities of his compositions and improvisations.



Petrucciani: made himself a great jazz pianist against all the odds of illness

Michel Petrucciani grew up in the South of France, and started playing the piano at the age of four. His illness led him to put in hours of study at the keyboard, and it quickly became obvious that he was an unusually gifted pianist. His family were all musicians, and his guitar-playing father encouraged the young Petrucciani to learn jazz, an enthusiasm spurred on by hearing Duke Ellington play on television, which he later described as an almost spiritual inspiration. Petrucciani remained devoted to Ellington, recording a solo disc *Promenade with Duke* in 1993, and introducing Ellingtonian sections of his concerts as by "the finest composer of the 21st century".

His two brothers were both proficient musicians, and Petrucciani frequently featured compositions by Phillippe, and included Louis (who played bass) in his 1994 touring band with the American drummer Lenny White and the Graffiti String Quartet. Petrucciani himself was an accomplished composer and his most effective pieces were those that he wrote for his close friends and family, especially his own sons.

One other effect of Petrucciani's illness was long hours spent watching television, and he developed a unique and quirky sense of humour, producing perfect vocal imitations of cartoon characters such as Daffy Duck, which would enliven his conversations on any subject.

In his teens, Petrucciani played alongside several American jazz musicians who worked in France, including the drummer Kenny Clarke, the trumpeter Clark Terry and the saxophonist Lee Konitz, with whom he toured in 1980. His success in such company led him to move to the United States in 1982, where he settled on the West Coast and worked with the saxophonist Charles Lloyd, whom he coaxed out of a self-imposed retirement.

Word spread of the extraordinary talent of the young Frenchman and, after moving to New York, he played with several other leading figures in American jazz, notably the guitarist Jim Hall, whom the pianist credited with teaching him the qualities of restraint and control. An openness to new ideas was a constant attribute of Petrucciani's work, and whilst solo piano remained his abiding interest, he experimented with synthesizers as enthusiastically as he later wrote for string quartet.

His Blue Note recording contract ended in 1994, but not before he had cut several outstanding albums, including *Pianism* (1985), *Power of Three* (with Jim Hall and the saxophonist Wayne Shorter, 1986), and *Michel Plays Petrucciani* (1987). This last album included the veteran drummer Roy Haynes, who subsequently toured with Petrucciani's trio.

In 1994 he signed to the French label Dreyfus, and began a new and fertile period of recording, including a set of duets with the organist Eddie Louiss.

He also tried working in a larger band format, collaborating with the American trombonist Bob Brookmeyer on the 1996 disc *Both Worlds*, but his finest achievements were as a solo pianist, demonstrated by the double-CD set of his 1992 concert *Au Théâtre Des Champs-Elysées*, which contains a magnificent uninterrupted 40-minute improvisation that seamlessly weaves together a medley of his favourite material.

Few other jazz pianists combined his natural facility with such a compelling blend of humour, imagination and driving swing.

He is survived by three sons.

ON THIS DAY

January 8, 1945

Field Marshal Montgomery was speaking to war correspndents during the closing stages of the Battle of the Bulge. In December 1944 Rundstedt with a powerful force of Panzers and infantry divisions, had launched a surprise assault in an attempt to break through the Allies in the Ardennes and then sieze Antwerp. Monty's intervention played a major part in frustrating him.

MONTGOMERY'S HEARTENING MESSAGE

WESTERN FRONT, Jan 7.

Field Marshal Montgomery said:-

This is my military philosophy. A fundamental point is shaping the battle to your design. I always maintain that you have got to decide what your design of battle is going to be before you start the battle and so you fight it your way and not anybody else's way and make the enemy dance to your tune.

Now, if you're going to fight battles that way, you've got to have balance or poise — so balanced that whatever the enemy may do there will never be any need for you to react to him. That is the fundamental point in my military philosophy. If you've not got balance obviously you are easily pushed off by the other chap. So I frequently examine my battle area and say to myself "Now I am balanced for anything the enemy may do." If he puts in a hard bang I have to be ready for him. That is terrifically important in this battle fighting. I learned it in Africa. You learn all these things by hard experience.

When Rundstedt put in his hard blow and parted the American Army, it was automatic that the battle area must be untidy. Therefore, the first thing I did when I was brought in and told to take over was to busy myself in getting the battle area tidy — getting it sorted out. I got reserves into the right places and got balanced — and you know what happened. I regrouped the American and British armies — a question of grouping is another important point mixed up with battle-winning.

One of the things I had to do was to position an army corps in what I thought was going to be the line of approach of the German left hook towards Namur and Dinant. It looked to me as if Rundstedt was trying to do a big left hook to the River Meuse. There was not much there — there was damn little there — so I collected here and there, pulled in divisions and formed an army corps under that very fine American General Collins. It was that corps, which I had formed for offensive action, which eventually took the full blow of Rundstedt's left hook. It took a knock. I said "Dear me, this can't go on. It's being swallowed up in the battle."

I set to work and managed to form the corps again. Once more pressure was such that it began to disappear in a defensive battle. I said: "Come, Come," and formed it again and it was put in offensively by General Hodges after we had consulted together, and that is his present job.

It is a question of getting balanced and putting reserves in such places that you don't mind what the enemy does because you have grouped your forces to meet the problem. And you must not hurry. You must have a well-balanced, tidy show when you are mixed up in a dogfight. You can't do it nohow — I do not think that word is English — you can't win the big victory without a tidy show.

DEATHS

WRIGHT - On December 28th, John, aged 83 years, of Ulverston. Dear husband of the late Doris and the late Joan, dear dad of Andrew and Celia and a dear grandfather. Formerly of Abingdon and Eastbourne, Balliol College, Oxford 1934-38; U.K.A.E.A. Harwell, P.S.O. (Retired 1980). The Funeral took place on Tuesday 5th January 1999. It was family flowers only but donations, if so desired, for Alzheimers Society, may be sent to M.T. Sawrey, Funeral Directors, Cavendish Street, Ulverston, Cumbria.

THANKSGIVING SERVICES

WILKINSON - A Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Brigadier Claude John (Jack) DSO will be held at St. Nicholas Church, North Walsham, Norfolk on Saturday January 30th 1999 at 12 noon. All who attend are invited to the Manor House, North Walsham Wood after the service.

IN MEMORIAM - PRIVATE

FISHER - F.J. Professor Emeritus. July 22nd 1908 - January 7th 1988. Remembered always. Barbara, Teresa and Matthew.

SIMMONS - In ever-living memory of my beloved husband Lewis Simmons (Sim) January 8th 1984. Norma.

BIRTHDAYS

Romy Natalia Hayes
Happy 1st Birthday,
All our love Mummy & Daddy.

THE TIMES TODAY

The President goes on trial

■ The trial to determine whether William Jefferson Clinton becomes the first President in American history to be removed from office by the Senate opened to solemn ceremonies not witnessed for 130 years.

But behind the stately scenes prescribed by the Constitution, party leaders' attempts to thrash out the rules of a trial with only one precedent remained in chaos. An appalled nation began to contemplate the prospect that the trial *could spin into* an uncontrollable partisan bloodbath.......Pages 1, 2, 3.

Building society questions Mandelson

■ Peter Mandelson has been questioned by building society investigators as officials consider reporting him to police over allegations about his mortgage application.......Pages 1, 10

Meningitis case

The eight-month-old daughter of Olympic athlete Judy Simpson has died of meningitis.......Page 1

Cancer prevention

Scientists have isolated a gene that plays a vital role in the development of many of the most common forms of cancer. At least half of all cancers may eventually become preventible.......Page5

Back to work

For Prince Edward work comes first. *After all the fuss and photo*calls he was back where he feels he belongs, behind his desk at Ardent Productions, his TV production company ....Page 7

Airstrikes terror

The British servicemen and women who took part in the airstrikes against Iraq spoke of the terror of combat and their fear of hitting civilian targetsas they arrived back in Scotland.......Page 9

Schools cash

Parents will be able to compare how local education authorities divide their cash between the classroom and administration in new league tables.......Page 12

New passion

Nigel Mansell has swapped racing cars for the "motor yacht of the millennium" — and says he gets more satisfaction out of boating than Formula One....Page 13

Caledonian culture

Scottish societies in the United States with extreme views about a pure white Caledonian culture are forging links with the Scottish National Party.......Page 14

Party house fire

A couple and their daughter died early when fire swept through the family home hours after a 21st birthday party.......Page 15

Bleak outlook

Fifty years after Viscount Montgomery's *pessimistic forecasts for* the future of Africa, the outlook remains bleak.......Page 16

Union Jack burnt

Hundreds of South African Muslims burnt the Union Jack outside the British High Commission and pledged to disrupt Tony Blair's visit after being dispersed with stun grenades ....Page 17

Spying on Iraq

American officials, reacting to leaks from senior United Nations officials, confirmed Iraq's long-standing suspicions that US spies worked under cover as UN weapons inspectors ....Page 18

Police chief goes

Malaysia's police chief resigned after taking full responsibility for injuries inflicted on Anwar Ibrahim, the former Finance Minister, while he was in police custody three months ago.......Page 19

Staples of life: rabbits and corsets

A detailed insight into major trends in British life took the late 1940s as its starting point as the official yearbook of the United Kingdom celebrated its 50th edition. In 1947 the retail price index included: wild rabbits, lard, condensed milk, back-lacing corsets, lamp oil, an iron bedstead, a hair mattress, a rubber-roller table mangle, distemper, and a wireless licence...Page 6



Dark red Sussex cattle are being brought back to meadows around Down House in Kent where Charles Darwin lived for 40 years

Rate falls: Interest rates are on the way down again after the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee cut base rates by a further 0.25 per cent to 6 per cent..Page 27

Barclays settles: Barclays led a £150 million settlement over the 1990 collapse of British and Commonwealth Holdings.......Page 27

Sales slow: Littlewoods, the family-owned retail group, was left disappointed by a slowdown in sales growth ahead of the expected Christmas boom ....Page 27

Markets: The FTSE 100 index fell 47.60 points to 6101.2. The pound *fell 0.64 cents to $1.6496 and* rose 0.03p against the euro to 70.74p. The sterling index fell to 99.0 from 99.2.......Page 30

Tennis: The International Tennis Federation may be forced to ban Petr Korda, the Australian Open champion from the Czech Republic, who was fined for failing a *drugs test at Wimbledon*...Page 52

Basketball: Embattled National Basketball Association leaders are banking on Michael Jordan to rescue their season.......Page 46

Rugby union: Angry English clubs have joined forces to threaten legal action against the clubsEnglish first division rugby if they go ahead with plans for an Anglo-Welsh league.......Page48

Golf: The opening rounds of the President's Putter gave a feeling of *deja vu* to Jamie Warman, who once again went out of the tournament to Neil Pabari.......Page 49

Richard Morrison: "I have just raced through a splendid book; a tome which restores my faith in the inspirational power of the arts" Now read on.......Page 38

Drama kings: The *RSC* has a stronger-than-usual stab at late Shakespeare with Gregory Doran's absorbing *The Winter's Tale*: plus Brecht's *The Life of Edward the Second of England*.......Page 38

Pop 1: The week's top new albums reviewed by David Sinclair: plus interviews with Nigerian star Femi Kuti and America's unsung band Ednaswap.......Page 39

Pop 2: A year ago the all-girl group All Saints were the elegant antidote to national Spice Girls overload. What went wrong? Caitlin Moran has the answers.......Page 40

Rank outsider: Calum McLean says he was "treated like a dog" and suffered "verbal rape" in the Royal Navy because he was homosexual. Now he and others are chal*lenging the armed forces*...Page 20

Jane Shilling: "There is said to come a moment in every woman's life when her interest in buying pretty things for herself is overtaken by her interest in buying pretty things for the house".......Page 21

Learning curve: What makes some people decide to train teachers rather than to teach children? Do they have the right motivation? Page 36

Future of Learning: 16-page supplement on teaching and technology

State of play: Will the politician Geoffrey Robinson hang on to the *New Statesman?*.......Page 42

Raymond Snoddy: Research into how television ads drive consumer purchases.......Page 44

A full impeachment trial is the only way irrevocably to resolve the question of whether Mr Clinton is fit to hold the office of president. Either way, Washington can get back to the business of goverance. The Senate has a responsibility to put the Lewinsky mess behind us.
— ***The Washington Times.***

TOMORROW

IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

■ HI, I'M BART

The Simpsons join the Saturday Times

■ HI, I'M POLLY

PJ Harvey lightens up

Preview: New series starts with Geri Halliwell: *Parkinson (BB1,9.30pm)* **Review:** The line between earnest social concern and voyeuristic sensationalism is a very fine one: *Dispatches*...Pages 50, 51

What Monty saw

Africans today are poorer than when Monty sought to make of the socialist Attlee and improbable second Cecil Rhodes.......Page 23

Bring forth the forms

Mr Mandelson has placed himself and the Britannia Building Society in a difficult position. He should now embrace candour.......Page 23

Know your limit

The public respects the drink-driv*ing laws as they stand. To lower the* limit would be an unacceptable, and unecessary, act.......Page 23

JONATHAN SACKS

The Millennium Dome is probably the first great national symbol about which no one is altogether sure what it symbolises. It has to do with a profound crisis in our sense of time.......Page 22

MARY ANN SIEGHART

If you had looked round a state primary school in the 1970s and found pegs labelled Chloe, Jessica and Georgia, or Thomas, James and Luke, you would have assumed that its catchment area was middle-class. Now it is just as likely to be on a council estate. You can no longer tell a child's background from its *name*.......Page 22

PHILIP HOWARD

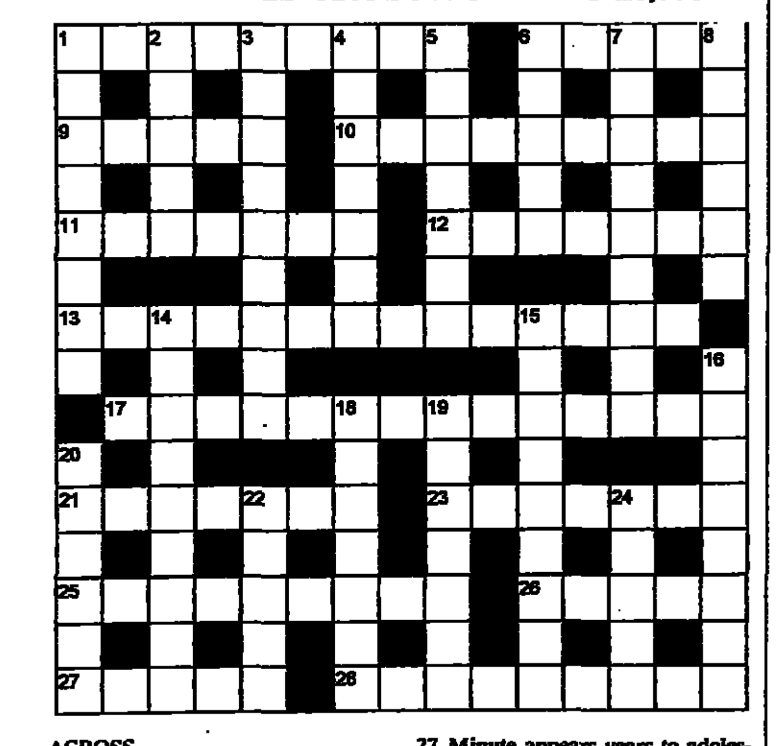
The cure for admiring the House of Lords is to go and look at it ... The cure for believing that Fings Ain't What They Used To Be is to have been stormbound for the past fortnight.......Page 22

Henrietta Moraes,model;**Kenneth Duke**, historian; **Michel Petrucciani**,pianist.......Page 25

Impeachment; refugees; New Year; flu epidemic; housing; books for schools.......page 23

2, 11, 18, 21, 23, 47.Bonus:27

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,995

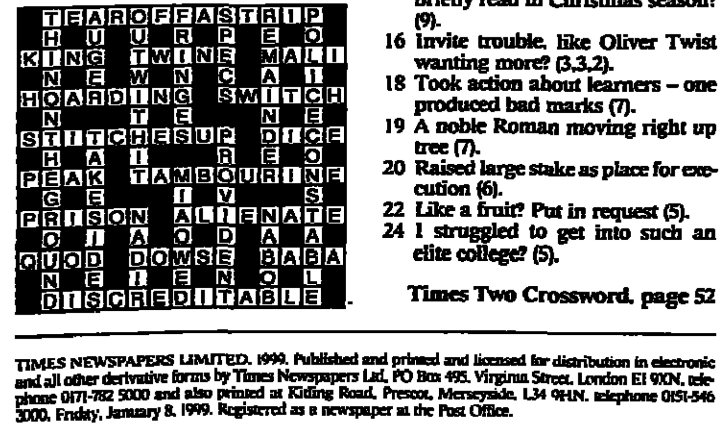


ACROSS
1 Cut down on work but somehow got in, of course (9).
6 Pierced one's skin (5).
9 Communication channels in Iran's territory once (5).
10 This roamed all over the place in desert conditions (9).
11 Fighter with power halved is cleaner (7).
12 Whence flows prosperity after a strike? (3,4).
13 Relatively large group? (8,6).
17 Prepare to fight to make improvements (5,9).
21 Establish where cattle may be? (7).
23 He may get a punch, having trouble gaining entry (7).
25 Plan of Berlin put out (9).
26 Persistent type of judge? (5).
27 Minute appears years to adolescent (5).
28 Doubt one's tried to smash earlier record (9).

DOWN
1 Extremely deceptive title, but one clears screen film (8).
2 Source of milk shake? Not initially (5).
3 Catch the swine pinching new harness (9).
4 Confirm death – animal has been beheaded (7).
5 Know-all explains why theatre's closed (4-3).
6 Original American line accepted – there may be a catch in it (5).
7 Borrow, say, from one who may have some cheques (9).
8 Classic sea hazard that is capsizing mate (6).
14 Fundamentally change exercises – one's left speechless (9).
15 Where New Testament may be briefly read in Christmas season? (9).
16 Invite trouble, like Oliver Twist wanting more? (3,3,2).
18 Took action about learners – one produced bad marks (7).
19 A noble Roman moving right up tree (7).
20 Raised large stake as place for execution (6).
22 Like a fruit? Put in request (5).
24 I struggled to get into such an elite college? (5).

Times Two Crossword, page 52

Solution to Puzzle No 20,994



TIMES NEWSPAPERS LIMITED, 1999. Published and printed and licensed for distribution in electronic and all other derivative forms by Times Newspapers Ltd, PO Box 495, Virginia Street, London E1 9XN, telephone 0171-782 5000 and also printed at Kidling Road, Prescot, Merseyside, L34 9HN, telephone 0151-546 3000, Friday, January 8, 1999. Registered as a newspaper at the Post Office.

Latest Road and Weather conditions

UK Weather- All regions	0336 444 910
UK Roads - All regions	0336 401 410
Inside M25	0336 401 746
M25 and Link Roads	0336 401 747
National Motorways	0336 401 748
Continental Europe	0336 401 910
Channel crossing	0336 401 388
Motoring to Heathrow & Gatwick airports	0336 407 505

Weather by Fax — The Met. Office

Dial 0336 followed by area number from your fax

West Country	416 334	N. Ireland	416 341
Wales	416 335	London	416 343
Midlands	416 336	National Satellite Weather picture	416 397
East Anglia	416 337		
N. West	416 338		
N. East	416 339		
Scotland	416 340		
Medfax Marine inshore leisure forecasts	416 398		

World City Weather — The Met. Office

153 destinations world wide 4 day forecasts

by Phone dial	0336 411216
by Fax (index page)	0336 416333

Motoring

Europe Country by Country	0336 401 885
European fuel costs	0336 401 886
French Motorways	0336 401 887
Seaport information	0336 401 882
Disneyland Paris	0336 401 409
Le Shuttle	0336 401 895

AA Car reports by fax

new and used car reports from the AA menu of 195 cars 0336 416 399

Dial from your fax handset, you may have to set to poll receive mode

Automobile Association Developments Ltd. Norfolk House Priestley Road Basingstoke RG24 9NY

Calls are charged at 50p per minute at all times.

Sun rises: 8.04 am	Sun sets: 4.10 pm
Moon sets: 11.20 am	Moon rises: 11.42 pm

Last quarter tomorrow

London 4.10 pm to 8.03 am
Bristol 4.20 pm to 8.13 am
Edinburgh 3.59 pm to 8.40 am
Manchester 4.09 pm to 8.22 am
Penzance 4.38 pm to 8.19 am

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORT RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up 46.03% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1997

☐ **General:** much colder. N England and Midlands cloudy with outbreaks of rain, then scattered showers, some wintry. Showers and a brisk wind in Wales and S England. N Ireland will have heavy downpours; hail and thunder possible. Sunny spells, showers in Scotland, the showers turning to snow as chilly NE wind develops. Tonight, cold, generally dry inland with a frost. Sleet and snow showers on E coasts and in N and W areas.

☐ **London, SE, Cent S England:** sunny spells; windy, showers later. Fresh to strong W wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **E Ang, Midlds, E, NW, Cent N, NE Engld, Lakes, IoM:** rain; wintry showers later. Fresh W wind, becoming NE. Max 7C (45F).

☐ **Channel Is, SW England, Wales:** scattered heavy showers; a few bright spells. Fresh/strong W to NW wind. Max 9C (48F).

☐ **Brdrs, E'brgh, D'dee, SW Sctld, G'gow:** early rain; sunny spells, showers; sleet, snow on hills. Mod/fresh NE wind. Max 6C (43F).

☐ **Abdeen, Cent Highlands, Mory Firth, NE, NW Sctld, Argyll, Orkny, Shetld:** showers, turning to sleet and snow. A few bright spells. Mod NE wind. Max 1C (39F).

☐ **N Ireland:** heavy and thundery showers; hail possible. Fresh NE wind. Max 5C (41F)

☐ **Rep of Ireland:** showery rain clearing. Wind blustery west, then N. Max 7C (45F)

☐ **Outlook:** cold with sunny spells. Wintry showers. Sharp overnight frosts.

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales; h=hail; r=rain, sh=shower, sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	1.1	0.05	4	39	b
Anglesey	0.5	0.28	9	48	r
Aspatria	0.3	0.09	8	43	r
Aviemore	2.1	0.01	5	41	b
Belfast	0.2	0.19	5	41	r
Birmingham	0.8	0.29	7	45	r
Bognor R	2.0	0.08	9	48	r
Bournemth	0.2	0.15	9	48	r
Bristol	0.1	0.20	9	48	r
Buxton	0.3	0.33	5	41	c
Cardiff	-	0.38	10	50	h
Clacton	1.2	0.06	8	46	b
Cleethorpes	2.8	0.16	7	45	c
Colwyn Bay	-	0.20	8	46	c
Cromer	3.6	0.23	7	45	s
Eastbourne	2.0	0.07	9	48	r
Edinburgh	0.1	0.09	5	41	c
Eskdalemuir	-	0.06	5	41	r
Exmouth	-	0.16	10	50	r
Fishguard	0.3	0.18	9	48	sh
Folkestone	3.5	0.06	10	50	b
Glasgow	0.4	0.01	5	41	du
Guernsey	2.3	0.24	11	52	r
Hastings	2.6	0.07	X	X	r
Hayling I.	1.2	0.06	10	50	r
Hove	1.2	0.03	9	48	r
Hunstanton	2.3	0.25	7	45	s
Isle of Man	0.1	0.63	8	46	r
Isle of Wight	X	0.19	10	50	r
Jersey	1.0	0.41	10	50	r
Kinloss	0.7	0.02	6	43	b
Leeds	2.0	0.14	8	46	sh
Lerwick	0.5	0.18	5	41	h
Leuchars	-	0.01	5	41	c
Littlehampton	1.5	0.10	10	50	r
London	0.5	0.21	9	48	r
Lowestoft	2.0	0.15	7	45	sh
Manchester	0.3	0.12	7	45	r
Margate	2.6	0.07	9	48	b
Morecambe	0.3	0.27	8	46	r
Newcastle	1.1	-	8	46	b
Newquay	-	0.13	10	50	r
Norwich	2.5	0.17	7	45	s
Oxford	1.0	0.38	8	46	r
Penzance	X	0.25	11	52	r
Poole	0.1	0.27	10	50	r
Prestatyn	0.1	0.24	7	45	r
Ross on Wye	-	0.32	7	45	r
Saunton Sands	-	0.23	10	50	sh
Scarborough	2.3	0.07	6	43	s
Shrewsbury	0.2	0.15	7	45	r
Skegness	3.3	0.26	7	45	r
Southport	X	0.47	7	45	sh
Stornoway	0.2	0.03	6	43	sh
Swanage	0.1	0.18	10	60	r
Teignmouth	-	0.18	10	50	sh
Tenby	0.2	0.35	10	50	r
Tiree	0.1	0.11	7	45	r
Torquay	-	0.19	X	X	r

Yesterday: highest day temp: Guernsey (Channel Islands) 11C (52F); lowest day max: Altnaharra (Highland) 3C (37F); highest rainfall: St.Bees Head (Cumbria) 0.68ins; highest sunshine: Cromer (Norfolk) 3.6hrs.

	C	F	
Ajaccio	13	55	s
Akrotiri	16	61	f
Alex'dria	18	64	f
Algiers	22	72	s
Amst'dm	12	54	s
Athens	14	57	s
Bahrain	2	72	s
Bangkok	33	91	f
Barbados	29	84	f
Barcelona	13	55	s
Beirut	17	63	f
Belgrade	10	50	s
Berlin	12	54	s
Bermuda	18	64	c
Biarritz	22	72	s
Bordeaux	14	57	s
Brussels	13	55	s
Budapest	1	34	fg
B Aires	24	75	s
Beijing	3	37	s
Cairo	18	64	c
Cape Tn	23	73	s
Chicago	-8	18	s
Ch'church	X		
Cologne	13	55	s
C'phagn	7	45	f
Corfu	15	59	s
Dublin	6	43	f
Dubrovnik	14	57	s
Faro	18	64	s
Florence	8	46	s
Frankfurt	10	50	s
Funchal	16	61	f
Geneva	5	41	fg
Gibraltar	17	63	s
Helsinki	-1	30	c
Hong K	22	72	s
Innsbruck	5	41	s
Istanbul	6	43	f
Jeddah	31	88	s
Jo'burg	24	75	f
L Palmas	20	68	s
Le Tquet	14	57	s
Lisbon	12	54	s
Locarno	9	48	s
L Angeles	18	64	s
Luxembg	8	46	s
Luxor	21	70	f
Madrid	12	54	s
Majorca	18	64	s
Malaga	17	63	s
Malta	17	63	s
Melbourne	20	68	s
Mexico C	16	61	s
Miami	19	66	s
Milan	5	41	f
Montreal	-8	18	s
Moscow	2	36	r
Munich	14	57	s
Nairobi	27	81	f
Naples	16	61	s
N Delhi	14	57	r
N York	-3	27	f
Nice	15	59	s
Oslo	-2	28	sn
Paris	13	55	s
Perth	19	66	s
Prague	12	54	s
Reykjavik	1	34	s
Rhodes	16	61	s
Rio de J	26	79	t
Riyadh	21	70	s
Rome	15	59	s
Salzburg	10	50	s
S Frisco	6	43	s
Santiago	29	84	s
S Paulo	X		
Seoul	4	39	c
Singapore	31	88	f
Stockholm	0	32	sn
Strasb'rg	12	54	s
Sydney	29	84	s
Tangier	19	66	s
Tel Aviv	18	64	f
Tenerife	20	68	s
Tokyo	11	52	s
Toronto	-5	23	s
Tunis	16	61	s
Valencia	11	52	c
Vanc'ver	5	41	r
Venice	3	37	fg
Vienna	0	32	fg
Warsaw	11	52	f
Wash'ton	-2	28	f
Wel'ngton	24	75	X
Zurich	6	43	s

Temperatures at midday local time on Wednesday. X = *not available*

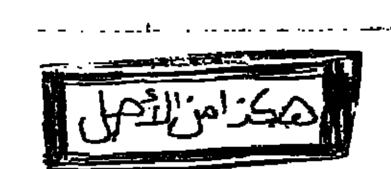


Changes to chart below from noon: low F fills slowly as it drifts southeast towards Austria. Low Y remains over Iceland as it fills and becomes indistinct. High A glides east, its central pressure unchanged

Warm front
Cold front
Occluded front

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	5:39	3.7	5:46	3.9
Avonmouth	11:11	11.5	11:34	10.9
Belfast	3:19	3.0	3:30	3.4
Cardiff	10:57	10.7	11:20	10.1
Devonport	9:29	4.9	9:57	4.6
Dover	2:50	6.2	3:15	5.8
Dublin	3:49	3.6	4:09	3.8
Falmouth	9:00	4.7	9:28	4.4
Greenock	4:42	3.2	4:30	3.6
Harwich	3:31	3.7	4:02	3.6
Holyhead	2:23	4.9	2:37	5.1
Hull (Albert D)	10:25	7.6	10:32	8.0
Ilfracombe	10:00	8.1	10:24	7.6
King's Lynn	10:38	5.5	10:36	5.6
Leith	6:54	4.9	7:16	4.9
Liverpool	3:06	8.3	3:24	8.4
London Bridge	5:45	6.6	6:15	6.6
Lowestoft	1:09	2.5	2:16	2.2
Margate	3:49	4.5	4:24	4.3
Milford Haven	10:18	6.1	10:43	5.7
Newquay	9:15	6.1	9:41	5.7
Oban	9:29	3.4	10:05	3.2
Penzance	8:40	5.0	9:06	4.6
Portland	10:43	1.7	11:14	1.4
Portsmouth	3:27	4.3	3:31	4.1
Shoreham	3:10	5.8	3:08	5.5
Southampton	3:02	4.1	3:12	3.9
Swansea	10:21	11.0	10:46	10.6
Tees	8:02	9.3	8:13	9.4
Walton-On-Naze	3:30	4.0	4:02	3.8

All times GMT. Heights in metres.



THE TIMES 2

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft   FRIDAY JANUARY 8 1999

Barclays leads £150m Atlantic settlement



Gunn: says he is vindicated

By Jason Nisse

A VEIL was drawn over one of greatest financial disasters in City history yesterday when Barclays Bank led a £150 million settlement of litigation brought over the collapse in 1990 of British & Commonwealth Holdings, the financial conglomerate.

B&C, once a FTSE 100 company, was placed in administration with debts of more than £1 billion weeks after the collapse of its subsidiary, Atlantic Computers, the leasing business.

Barclays, whose merchant banking subsidiary, Barclays de Zoete Wedd, advised B&C on its fateful £408 million purchase of Atlantic two years before its failure, is paying £116 million as part of the settlement of writs issued by Ernst & Young, the administrators of B&C, over the Atlantic deal. It also lent more than £100 million to B&C as the group's main banker, though most of this money has been recovered since B&C's collapse.

The writ, issued in 1994, originally claimed more than £500 million, which was the amount that B&C had to write off when Atlantic was placed in administration. This was reduced to £430 million early last year, though by the end of the year the interest bill had increased the total liability to more than £850 million.

The case, in which the administrators allege negligence by BZW and a host of City firms for not spotting the problems with Atlantic's finances which ultimately brought the leasing company down, was not due to come to court until May 2000 and was scheduled to last up to 18 months.

A complex settlement of the action, brokered by the Centre for Dispute Resolution, was agreed yesterday involving more than half a dozen parties from the City, though none accepted liabilities for B&C's losses.

Barclays is paying £116 million, though more than £40 million of this will be covered by indemnity insurance. It kept its share of the liability despite selling BZW to Credit Suisse First Boston last year, this being a condition of the controversial sale. Deloitte & Touche, the accountant, is to contribute more than £20 million to the settlement. It took over Spicer & Oppenheim, which had been Atlantic's auditor. The lion's share of this is being paid to Atlantic's administrators, who will then pay a dividend to B&C.

NM Rothschild, which was the merchant banking adviser to Atlantic, is paying more than £2 million as part of the settlement. Pricewaterhouse-Cooopers is also paying more than £1 million. Coopers & Lybrand, one of the firms which merged to form PwC, is paying more than £1 million, as it advised B&C though, ironically, Price Waterhouse, the other half of PwC, is the administrator of Atlantic.

The settlement means that many of the creditors of B&C will receive 100p in the pound back for the money they lost. Even the unsecured creditors, who tend to come at the bottom of the pile in any liquidation, will receive in the order of 86p in the pound. The next payout to creditors is due next month.

John Gunn, former chairman of B&C, welcomed the settlement, and said it was vindication for his view that he had been let down by the bankers who advised him. Mr Gunn fought a long battle against the Department of Trade and Industry, which sought his disqualification as a director over the collapse of B&C.

He said that when he won his case it became obvious that the banks and accountants would have to settle with B&C.

Creditors of Atlantic will not be so fortunate. John Soden, of PwC, said that, depending on the resolution of a few minor issues to do with the structure of Atlantic, creditors will receive between 20p and 30p in the pound. There are still writs outstanding against some of the directors of Atlantic. However, Mr Soden said these were for minor amounts and would be settled in the near future.

Commentary, page 29
Brought down, page 31

Bank brings base rate down to 6%

By Janet Bush, Economics Editor

INTEREST rates are on the way down again after the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee yesterday cut base rates by a further 0.25 per cent to 6 per cent.

The reduction, which had not been widely expected in the City after three months of cuts, returned base rates to the level prevailing when Labour came to power in May 1997. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, handed rate decisions to the Bank shortly afterwards.

In a statement explaining its decision yesterday the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) cited clear risks to growth from the situation in the international economy. On the domestic front it pointed to evidence that the labour market had reached a turning point and that the upward pressure on wages appeared to have eased.

The move was widely welcomed by business and industry but left some voices asking for more. Kate Barker, chief economic adviser at the Confederation of British Industry, said that yesterday's quarter-point cut was unlikely to dispel industry's new year blues. "Further rate cuts will be needed to ward off the danger of outright recession. We believe that rates should be down towards 5 per cent by the spring," she said.

Interest rate futures rose sharply after the MPC announcement and are now pricing in base rates of 5 per cent by the end of this year.

Ian Peters, deputy director-general of the British Chambers of Commerce, said: "Our ultimate objective must be to bring UK interest rates into line with our competitors in the new eurozone as soon as possible."

Yesterday's cut closed the gap with Europe a little but, at 6 per cent, British base rates are still double the 3 per cent prevailing in euroland. The European Central Bank's council met yesterday and left rates unchanged. Denmark, however, another country that has opted out of the euro so far, cut its key rates by a fifth of a point to 3.75 per cent.

Earlier yesterday the CBI published its monthly distributive trades survey, showing a slight improvement in retail sales volumes in December.

Although this provided evidence that the Christmas shopping season had not been as bad as many retailers had warned, it did not deter the MPC from cutting rates again in view of other weak surveys in recent days from manufacturing and service industries.

On the stock market the FTSE 100 index of leading shares briefly rallied on news of the unexpected rate cut but then slid again as investors took profits after this week's surge to near record highs.

The FTSE closed 47.6 points lower at 6,101.2, though this is a relatively small proportion of Wednesday's 190-point rise.

Sterling was left unmoved by yesterday's rate cut, ending unchanged from Wednesday's close on its index against a basket of currencies at 99.0.

European bourses, many of which had hit records on Wednesday, also fell prey to profit-taking yesterday and the euro fell victim to a surge in the yen which hit a 27-month high of Y109.82 against the dollar.

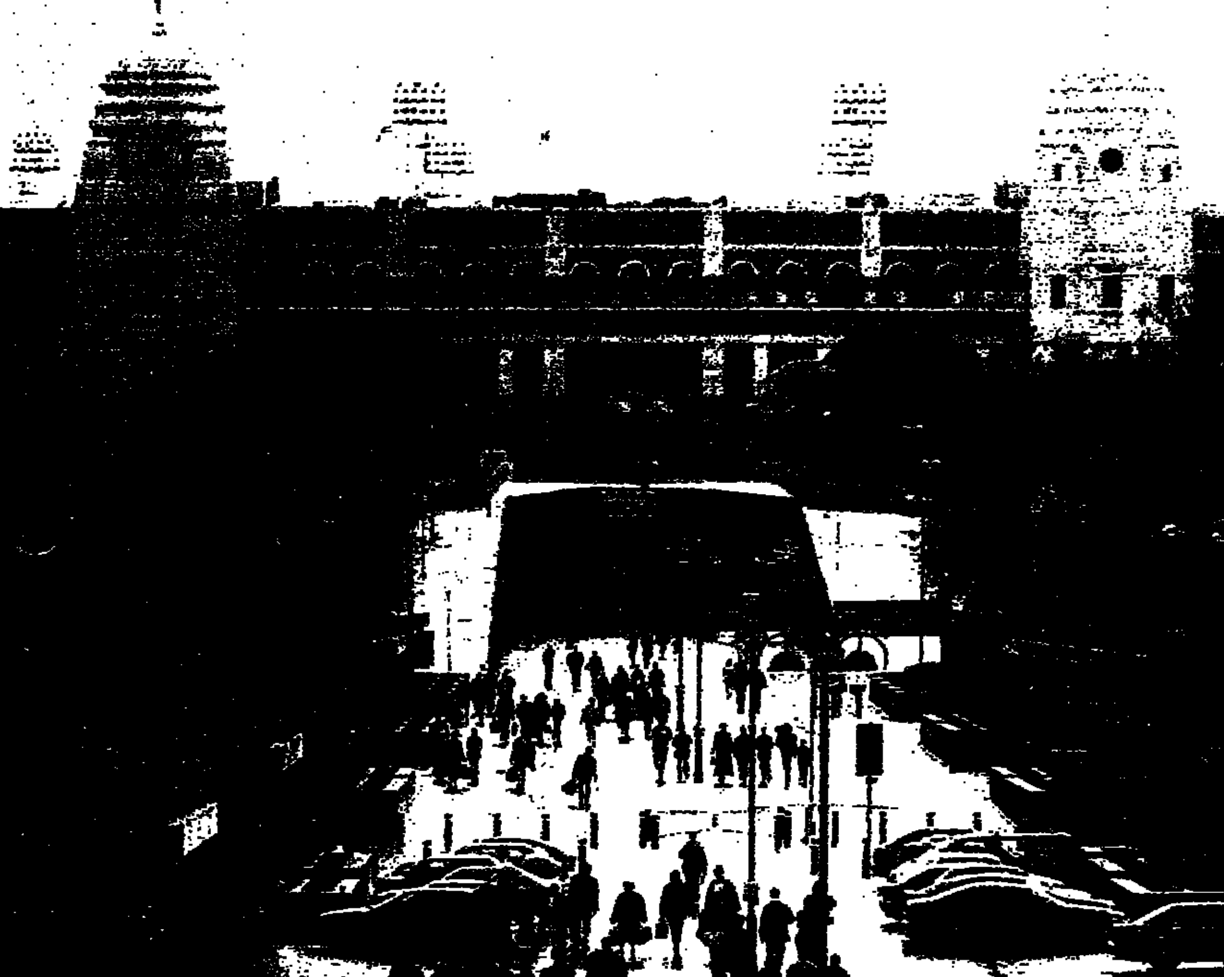
The euro fell to Y128 in Far Eastern trading overnight, its lowest level since its launch on Monday. Part of the yen's strength this week has been due to the unwinding of complex investment positions in Japanese government bonds.

More than this, however, is a perception of increasing fragility in the dollar. Yesterday, the US currency was undermined by worries about impeachment proceedings and partly because of financial troubles in Brazil.

The third-largest Brazilian state called a 90-day debt moratorium on its payments to the central government, a development that sent shivers through Wall Street because Brazil buys 20 per cent of all US exports.

By early afternoon the Dow Jones industrial average was down 79.5 points at 9,465.42, reversing some of Wednesday's record-breaking run.

Commentary, page 29



If Enic buys Wembley, owner of the national football stadium, it need not prevent it from being rebuilt for a World Cup bid

Enic to tackle Wembley with cash and shares bid

By Adam Jones

ENIC, the football and leisure group, is trying to buy Wembley, the owner of the national football stadium, in a move that throws England's troubled bid for the 2006 World Cup further into doubt.

Wembley shares surged 55p to 367½p, valuing the company at more than £200 million, after it admitted that it had received a takeover approach.

Enic, which has stakes in various European football clubs, including Glasgow Rangers, is thought to be offering a mix of cash and shares for Wembley, which also owns Wembley Arena and the conference centre, as well as US race tracks. Wembley's executive directors are thought to have looked unfavourably on the cash-and-shares approach. Enic shares have tumbled from 292½p to 123½p in the past year.

Wembley Stadium needs to be rebuilt for the World Cup bid. For this to happen, Wembley plc — which is not eligible for National Lottery funding — had agreed to sell the stadium to a qualifying trust, the English National Stadium Development Company.

The £103 million sale was agreed by the board despite objections by some non-executives, understood to be: Peter Mead, chairman of Abbott Mead Vickers, the advertising agency; Jarvis Astaire, a promoter; and Roger Brooke, chairman of Candover, the venture capitalist. It is understood that the deal to sell the stadium to the trust, which will ultimately be controlled by the Football Association, could be signed in the next few days after Customs & Excise confirmed that it will not be subject to VAT.

However, the deal will not be finalised until it is passed by Wembley plc shareholders, allowing a hostile bidder room to scupper the sale. A source close to the negotiations said it was not necessarily the case that Enic would scrap the sale.

Volvo car division rumours persist

By Carl Mortished
International Business Editor

TAKEOVER speculation continues to swirl around Volvo, the Swedish car and truck manufacturer, as leading Swedish institutions confirmed their interest in a sale of the group's car division.

Volvo refused to comment on reports that the company had appointed JP Morgan, the US investment bank to advise on a sale or merger of its automobile division which accounts for about half of group sales and profits.

However, the Volvo "B" share price continued to rise on hopes that the company could secure up to £4 billion for the car maker. Volvo's stock has gained more than 20 per cent over the past week as rumours of a deal with Ford, Fiat or Volkswagen, gain ground.

Major shareholders of Volvo, including Robur, AMF and Skandia Insurance, accounting for a fifth of the equity, indicated they were not averse to such a move if terms were acceptable.

Chris Wills, analyst at Lehman Bros, said Ford would be the ideal partner as the US company already manufactures large cars and could provide the platform for new Volvo models. "Ford would get into a higher-margin car business. It could share engines and launch Volvos more cheaply."

Littlewoods disappoints on two fronts

By Sarah Cunningham

LITTLEWOODS, the family-owned retail group, was left disappointed by a slowdown in sales growth at its high street stores and catalogue operation ahead of Christmas, and said it expects the retail sector to remain in the doldrums until autumn at the earliest.

Barry Gibson, chief executive of the Liverpool group, which is owned by the Moores family, said that underlying sales growth in the key nine weeks to January 2 slowed to 2 per cent. This compares with 8 per cent year-on-year growth in the preceding six months.

Clothing was by far the worst-performing part of the business. Some consumer durables, such as mobile phones, sold very well, helping to boost the performance of the Index Extra combined high street/catalogue business.

Mr Gibson said that sales were noticeably weaker in the north of the country. "In areas where there is a dependency on manufacturing there is a very marked slowdown indeed. Unemployment is becoming a really big worry," he said.

Although the winter sales have started well, he takes a gloomy view of the coming months. He does not believe yesterday's quarter-point cut in base rates will have a significant impact on consumer confidence: "I don't think we'll see a bounce back until the autumn," he said.

Littlewoods has begun 1999 with a relatively tight stock postion and no markdown concerns, he said. A number of clothing retailers, including the market leader Marks & Spencer, as well as Sears and Arcadia, had to discount heavily ahead of Christmas to clear seasonal stock. All three will report on their Christmas trading later this month.

Next, another leading clothing retailer, gave a cheerier view of the market on Wednesday, but it is thought by analysts to be the exception rather than the rule.

As at Next, Littlewoods said that its catalogue business had performed less well than the high street stores.

Home shopping sales at Littlewoods were up just 1 per cent in the nine-week period, compared with a 3 per cent rise in the high street stores. Mr Gibson said that discounting on the high street had hit catalogue sales because the latter were unable to lower prices once they were printed.

IT IS not only Prince Edward and his bride-to-be Sophie Rhys-Jones who have been busy acquiring expensive diamonds over Christmas.

Tiffany, the famous New York jeweller, yesterday reported a 20 per cent rise in revenues during November and December over 1997's festive period.

Boosted by spending on the inflated platinum credit card accounts of Wall Street's bonus recipients, the company said: "Healthy sales growth was achieved in all of Tiffany's channels of distribution, led by strong comparable store sales increases in the US and Japan."

William Chaney, chairman of Tiffany, said: "We will continue to focus on Tiffany's proven growth strategies and supporting it with impactful merchandising and marketing initiatives."

Mr Chaney also announced a change in the ownership structure of the company. Mitsukoshi, one of the top Japanese retail groups, said it will sell its 12 per cent stake. Tiffany shares rose $5 to $57 after the announcement.

Business Today

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6101.2	(-47.6)
Yield	2.68%	
FTSE All Share	2764.57	(-16.74)
Nikkei	13536.56	(+68.10)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9492.19	(-52.78)*
S&P Composite	1268.67	(-3.67)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	4[illegible]%*	(3[illegible]%)
Long bond	100[illegible]*	(101[illegible])
Yield	5.23%*	(5.18%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	6[illegible]%	(6%)
Liffe long gilt future (Mar)	119.46	(119.16)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6492*	(1.6552)
London:		
$	1.6497	(1.6563)
	1.4135	(1.4132)
SFr	2.2859	(2.2842)
Yen	183.35	(186.48)
£ Index	99.0	(99.2)

DOLLAR

London:		
	1.1672*	(1.1615)
SFr	1.3855*	(1.3925)
Yen	111.68*	(112.93)
$ index	103.3	(103.4)

Tokyo close Yen 110.92

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Mar)	$11.30	($11.50)

GOLD

London close	$290.05	($287.45)

* denotes midday trading prices

Fresh losses at Griffin Trading

Futures traders struggling to recover at least half of their money from Griffin Trading, the collapsed clearing house, face a new hurdle after fresh losses of up to $2 million (£1.1 million) emerged at the firm's head office in Chicago. Page 28

Staying away

Chris Gent, chief executive of Vodafone, refuses to shorten his holiday in spite of fears that the company's attempt to take over AirTouch, the US operator, looks set to be hijacked by a counter offer from MCI WorldCom. Page 29

Decision over ING Barings delayed

By Paul Durman

The future of ING Barings, the investment banking arm of the Dutch financial group, is to be decided next month.

ING's management board discussed the fate of Barings earlier this week, but David Robins, chief executive since last October, has been given another month to complete his strategic review. ING Barings ran up losses and provisions of about 2 billion guilders (£645 million) in the first nine months of last year, highlighting its exposure to emerging markets.

The bank is expected to embark on another round of restructuring, after deciding to cut 1,200 jobs last autumn. A spokesman suggested sale or closure was not on the agenda.

He said: "ING has always retained its commitment to the business and corporate and investment banking in general. It is a core activity that it has to keep going if it is going to serve its clients. The nuclear option [closure or sale] is not on the cards."

Godfried van der Lugt, chairman of ING, recently told staff that the group would have to accept a fall in business from emerging markets — previously a focus of its investment.

He said the key aims of the new strategy "are greater stability in ING Barings' results and improved profitability. We shall remain active in emerging markets and the US, but the emphasis will clearly be on the countries of Western Europe."

Responsibility for ING Barings on the group's executive board now rests with Michel Tilmant, who is also president of BBL and chairman of the executive committee for ING Belgium.

ING Barings employs about 9,000 staff, including about 1,700 in the UK.

Sales surge fails to lift motor industry doubts

By Arthur Leathley
Transport Correspondent

FRESH doubts emerged over the future of some of the best-known motor manufacturers last night amid forecasts of heavy falls in sales this year.

The motor industry, fresh from a successful sales year in 1998, is braced for an 8.8 per cent fall prompted by economic uncertainty.

A late flurry of sales activity in December lifted the number of registrations last year to 2.2 million, slightly below the record 2.3 million figure for 1989.

But manufacturers expect a sharp downturn this year to coincide with a series of mergers and takeovers involving some of the biggest names in the industry.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) admitted surprise yesterday at the late sales surge, which pushed December figures 13.8 per cent above the corresponding month in 1997.

However, they fear that a slowdown in 1999 is likely to take the gloss off the first year in which new registration plates are issued twice, in March and Seoptember. Predictions of an 8.8 per cent fall would bring sales down to about 2.05 million.

Roger King, the SMMT's acting chief executive, said: "There will be a fall this year but we are not despondent because it comes after such good sales. We do expect a period of consolidation among the manufacturers this year and there are clearly many more partnerships emerging between the main players.

"The effect of the plate change will take a while to work through the system, but eventually March may well become the lead month."

Ford took the first three places in the 1998 top sellers' list with its Fiesta, Escort and Mondeo models.

Ford was also the biggest-selling company overall last year, taking almost 17.9 per cent of the new car market. Vauxhall stayed in second place, with a 12.5per cent share, while Rover held on to third spot despite its share dipping from 10 per cent in 1997 to 8.6 per cent in 1998.

TOP TEN SELLING MODELS FOR 1998

1. Ford Fiesta
2. Ford Escort
3. Ford Mondeo
4. Vauxhall Vectra
5. Renault Megane
6. Vauxhall Astra
7. Vauxhall Corsa
8. Peugeot 306
9. Rover 200
10. Rover 400.

Bumpy ride at Goode Durrant

By Manus Costello

GOODE DURRANT, the light commercial vehicle hire company, is blaming a decrease in the residual value of its vans for a 6 per cent drop in interim profits, and said that the situation is set to continue.

Pre-tax profits were hit by £2.5 million to stand at £15.1 million for the six months to October 31. The losses on residuals for the full year are expected to be £4.5 million. The low prices in the second-hand vehicle market are losing the company around £500 per unit on sale, the company said.

Alan Noble, chief executive, reported a 32 per cent rise in turnover to £116.6 million and said an economic downturn might be positive for the company. "In our business, recession is not a bad thing — customers switch from buying to hiring."Earnings per share fell to 17.1p (21.7p). The interim dividend is lifted to 4p (3.75p). The shares rose from 288p to 296p.

Tempus, page 30

MICHAEL SCOTT



Acquistion trail: from left, Graeme Potts, Peter Vardy, chairman, and Ged Murray, finance director

Reg Vardy to spend £35m

REG VARDY intends to challenge Jardine Motors for the number two position in the car dealership industry by spending a further £35 millon to snap up its smaller rivals (Fraser Nelson writes).

Graeme Potts, chief executive, said the company is looking for dealerships in Scotland, Yorkshire and the Midlands. It is also considering Birmingham and Brighton.

He said: "The market is consolidating, and this gives us opportunity to fill in the geographical gaps we have. The whole thing is still very fragmented; we are third-largest, with almost 70 dealerships and there are about 6,000 in the UK."

The new acqusitions would be funded by taking out extra borrowings.

Mr Potts said he is prepared to increase gearing from 40 to 75 per cent, which would be £77 million.

Last year, it spent £35 million buying Trust Motors — comprising ten dealerships — and six other dealerships in England.

This helped pre-tax profits to £12.3 million (£8.41 million) in the six months to October 31 taking earnings to 14.7p (10.3p) per share. The interim dividend rises to 3.2p (2.8p).

Tempus, page 30

Chicago clearing house in further $2m loss

By Gavin Lumsden

FUTURES traders struggling to recover at least half of their money from Griffin Trading, the collapsed clearing house, face a new hurdle after fresh losses of up to $2 million (£1.1 million) emerged at the firm's head office in Chicago.

Investigators of events behind Griffin's bankruptcy are believed to have uncovered unauthorised trading by Scott Szach, its chief finanical officer, which is estimated to have cost the firm between $1.5 million and $2 million.

It is not clear whether Mr Szach's alleged dealings are connected with John Park, the Korean-born trader, whose £6.2 million losses on German government bonds forced Griffin and GLH (Derivatives), a trading firm of which he was a member, into insolvency just before Christmas.

Griffin's collapse has caused consternation on the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (Liffe). About 100 traders who used the clearing house have been temporarily forced out of business after a big chunk of their clients' money was taken by Mees Pierson, the Dutch bank which cleared deals on behalf of Griffin on Eurex, the German futures exchange. Despite this action, the bank is still facing losses of several million pounds.

Finbarr O'Connell, partner at accountants Grant Thornton and joint liquidator to Griffin, said £3 million remained in the firm's client account in London.

Whether all of this was returned to traders depended on legal advice and their contracts, he said. The Securities and Futures Authority, however, said it would encourage an accelearated interim payout if there were difficulties.

The affair has shocked many traders, who mistakenly believed that client money had been "segregated" into separate accounts at Griffin, whereas in fact it had merely been ring-fenced from the firm's assets.

BP Amoco to shed 900 jobs in UK

BP AMOCO is shedding 900 jobs in the UK in a bid to restore profits in the upstream exploration business. Staff in Aberdeen and at Amoco's London office were given the news just days after the merger between the British and US oil companies became official. A spokesman for BP said that 200 jobs would be lost in onshore administrative and among technical staff in Aberdeen. A further 490 jobs will go at Amoco's UK headquarters at Hangar Lane in West London. Other jobs will be lost in Uxbridge, Middlesex, and elsewhere

The redundancies announced yesterday are unlikely to be the end of the matter. BP has indicated that job losses are likely to be more than the 6,000 worldwide previously indicated. The speed with which Sir John Browne, chief executive, has wielded the axe indicates the sense of emergency at BP Amoco over the low oil price. Current estimates put the cost of producing a North Sea barrel at $12. The oil price last night was $11.67.

Wolseley US growth

WOLSELEY, the building merchants, has completed the acquisition of four American distribution businesses for $68 million (£41 million). It said the businesses will add $158 million to annual group sales, which stood at £4.76 billion in 1998. The businesses include Fields & Co of Lubbock, a distributor based in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Alabama. Wolseley shares, which stood as high as 556p last year, rose from 362¾p to 370p yesterday.

British Gas price cuts

GAS prices for about ten million customers are to fall by about £5 a year as British Gas starts a new charging plan. Households that pay quarterly bills on time will see bills cut by 2 per cent in March. A further million who have pre-payment meters will have a reduction of 1.5 per cent. Those paying by monthly direct debit, who have the cheapest tariffs, will have bills frozen. Separately, British Gas said it had recruited 800,000 electricity customers as deregulation in domestic power spreads.

BBA bug warning

UK BANKS have given warning that one in four small or medium-sized business are at "high risk" from the millennium bug because they have failed to identify the potential threat to their supply chains. A report by the British Bankers Association said that the wholesale and retail distribution sector is "particularly vulnerable". A BBA spokesman said: "Many businesses are making the mistake of regarding the year 2000 problem as solely an IT issue."

Leisure deal aborted

THE proposed takeover of Lady In Leisure, the operator of health and fitness clubs, by South Country Homes was aborted yesterday. Lady In Leisure, whose shares fell 17½p to 162½p yesterday, said the two companies had been unable to agree terms. Shares in South Country Homes remain suspended at 44½p as the company has entered negotiations over the reverse takeover of a private leisure business. The company said a further announcement was likely within four weeks.

P&O shares dip

SHARES of P&O fell 38½p to 635p despite an upbeat trading statement from the cruises division. Princess Cruises, based in America, lifted the passenger berth days sold in the fourth quarter to 1.2 million from 988,315 the previous year. P&O Cruises (UK) rose to 386,723 (224,450). P&O has increased capacity for 1999 and says bookings are ahead of last year. However, analysts have cut profit forecasts because of worries that the company is failing to sell enough high-yield, long-distance cruises.

Methven's open offer

METHVEN'S, the retail bookseller, is raising £1.6 million through a placing and open offer at 30p per share to fund new branch openings. The company reported pre-tax losses of £23,000 for the year ended September 30, compared with a loss of £5,000 last time. Turnover was up 44 per cent at £5.2 million and like-for-like sales were up 10.7 per cent. There is again no dividend. Exceptional costs were £113,000, with the company's bookshops increasing from five to eight.

Abbey issues warning

ABBEY, the property and plant hire group based in the Irish Republic, reported improved interim results, but, in order to curb the "irrational exuberance" of some analysts, issued a profits warning for the second half. Pre-tax profit was IR£9.9 million (£8.8 million) for the six months to October 31, from Ir£7.6 million last time. Earnings per share were Ir17.56p (Ir13.08p) and turnover was Ir£44.7 million (Ir£39.8 million). The interim dividend is up 17 per cent at Ir3.5p.

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.70	2.52
Austria Sch	20.48	18.82
Belgium Fr	60.28	55.32
Canada $	2.615	2.427
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8664	0.7949
Denmark Kr	11.12	10.23
Egypt	5.81	5.20
Finland Mkk	8.96	8.21
France Fr	9.75	8.97
Germany Dm	2.931	2.689
Greece Dr	486	447
Hong Kong $	13.60	12.40
Iceland	127	107
Indonesia	16810	11810
Ireland Pt	1.169	1.080
Israel Shk	7.06	6.40
Italy Lira	2914	2677
Japan Yen	198.69	181.16
Malta	0.659	0.600
Netherlds Gld	3.310	3.01[illegible]
New Zealand $	3.19	2.95
Norway Kr	12.85	11.91
Portugal Esc	296.29	274.26
S Africa Rd	10.27	9.31
Spain Pta	246.96	228.17
Sweden Kr	13.82	12.72
Switzerland Fr	2.441	2.223
Turkey Lira	543337	507222
USA $	1.755	1.612

Rates for small denomination bank-notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

Doves in full flight



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

The Monetary Policy Committee has been turned into a dovecote. Yesterday's cut in interest rates, although but a meagre quarter of a per cent, was the fourth in succession. It came despite some statistics which might have enabled any lingering hawks to argue in favour of a month of wait and see. But the fact is that even the most inflation-fearing of economists cannot now sniff out a whiff of that danger in the UK economy: the latest cut is evidence of the MPC's acknowledgement that recession looms.

The quarter per cent, and the prospect of a weaker pound which it should bring with it, will not be enough to silence the bleatings of manufacturers. They fear that the moment they say "enough", the MPC will suspect that it has gone too far and take remedial action. Nonetheless, the rapid moves of the building societies to cut their rates was greeted with glee and the suggestion that there might be a rapid transfer of that excitement to the high street stores.

Some hope! While almost 11 million mortgages affect the spending patterns of the nation, there are many more people who are lenders rather than borrowers. For the holders of the 40 million savings accounts in the country, another cut in interest rates is anything but good news.

For those whose lifestyle depends on income from their savings, a spot of retail therapy to brighten a gloomy January, for themselves and the struggling retailers, is now even less likely to figure on the agenda. The beneficiaries of higher interest rates tend to be ignored in the economic debate but the growing proportion of pensioners in the country adds to their numbers daily.

Many of the elderly who chose to put their money into the stock market instead of the building society are already seeing their spending power hacked away. Before his unlamented departure from the office of Paymaster General, Geoffrey Robinson ruled that non-tax paying pensioners should no longer be able to claw back the advance corporation tax on their share dividends.

Those who benefit from multi-million off-shore trust funds do not need to worry about such sums but for pensioners on limited incomes, and without generous friends to loan them hundreds of thousands of pounds without worrying about the interest, the financial future is looking ever more bleak.

Withdrawing the tax concession was a mean move which, in Mr Robinson's absence, should be reconsidered. Not that sensible pensioners may want to risk their money in the stock market, anyhow. Yesterday's bout of profit-taking, reversing much of the previous day's gain, indicated just how wary investors are of the ability of share prices to continue to defy gravity.

As the MPC's decision implies, the world slowdown is inevitably affecting the UK. Falling corporate earnings will sooner or later have to be reflected in share prices.

Working time rule can damage health

The Working Time Directive is one of those pieces of legislation whose full impact takes time to dawn. When this European brainwave was absorbed into UK law last year, the protests were fairly muted. Now, however, the huge costs inherent in its implementation are hitting home and they go well beyond the massive increase in form-filling that was one of the first consequences to be felt, often by small businesses which do not have the spare administrative capacity to cope with yet another bureaucratic demand. Government pledges to cut red tape have been buried under the sheaves of extra paperwork that the Directive is forcing onto companies.

But the extra burden falls not merely on the commercial sector. As Frank Dobson tries to persuade us that the current crisis in the National Health Service is all the fault of Sydney flu, the Directive is actually wreaking havoc on the already over-stretched finances of the NHS.

The obligation to provide agency workers with virtually all the benefits of being full-time employees has disastrous implications for the Health Service. Private nursing homes are finding that the costs of hiring agency nurses are close to doubling, in some cases, because of the increased obligations to provide for them. The shortage of nurses in the NHS already drives it to use more and more agency staff — at least one in eight nurses in NHS trusts is now likely to come through an agency. What the Working Time Directive does is make it increasingly attractive for nurses to opt for the flexibility of working through an agency rather than for an NHS trust. The wage bill is, therefore, set to ratchet up even further.

While some hospitals aim to solve the problem by flying in contingents of eager Phillipinos desperate to hit the wards, overall Mr Dobson seems to have no choice but to accept that the NHS will be employing more and more nurses through private sector agencies. Yet in other areas, he seems keen to cut back on cooperation between the public and the private sector in matters of health. The drive to cut waiting lists might have been accomplished even faster had the NHS been prepared to sub-contract more simple operations to efficient private hospitals.

This is just one of the areas which the Select Committee on Health might probe as it studies the submissions, due in by next Friday, from the private sector. More cooperation rather than less should be the aim.

No one left to carry the can

Doctors bury their mistakes, bankers merely leave them behind when they move to another job. It is no good blaming the current regime at Barclays, or even the recently departed Martin Taylor, for the errors that led it to pay out £116 million to the administrators of British & Commonwealth. The head of Barclays in those days, Sir John Quinton, now heads the FA Premier League, while the then head of BZW, Sir Martin Jacomb, is chairman of the Pru and the merchant banker who advised B&C to buy Atlantic, Richard Heley, is now at Charterhouse. So Barclays ends up out of pocket with no one to carry the can.

John Gunn knows who to blame, though. The B&C boss points out that now Barclays and co have settled with the administrators, all the secured creditors will get back 100p in the pound, while unsecured creditors will get at least 85p. Given the displacement that always happens during administration, this indicates that B&C may have been solvent, even after writing off its losses on Atlantic.

Gunn has long maintained that Midland Bank pulled the plug on B&C in order to try and stop the legal action against its merchant banking arm, Samuel Montagu, over the Quadrex débâcle. If so, the strategy failed, as the administrators carried on suing and ultimately won £172 million from HSBC, by then owner of Midland. Naturally, Sir Kit McMahon, Midland's boss in those days, has long moved on.

Bug worries

WITH less than a year to go, the British Bankers' Association has come to the view that business is not taking the prospective bite of the millennium bug seriously enough. Its message is that fears over cost should not deter companies from taking steps to ward off the potential problem, although there are no promises of preferential borrowing rates for those with bug problems. Wary businesses may suspect that owning up to their bug difficulties will result not in sympathy but a withdrawal of all credit.

Digital television forecast

More than 5.6 million homes in the UK will have digital satellite television by 2008, according to Baskerville Communications, the international market information group. The company, which is based in California, believes that the UK will have the highest penetration of digital satellite in the world by 2008 and by then will be generating revenues of $4 billion (£2.4 billion) a year. By then the company expects 45.8 per cent of UK homes to have multi-channel television.

The UK forecasts are part of an international study, Global Digital Satellite TV. Baskerville predicts that digital satellite will show rapid growth over the next decade and will rise from 16.8 million to 61 million worldwide by 2008. Total revenues are forecast to hit $38.6 billion a year. The US is expected to account for more than 28 per cent of the total.

Peptide positive

Peptide Therapeutics, the vaccine company that needs to raise new money to finance its proposed £9 million acquisition of OraVax, announced positive results from phase II studies of its typhoid vaccine and its hayfever treatment. John Brown, chief executive, said the oral typhoid vaccine results were "all we could have hoped for". However, the hayfever treatment, under option to SmithKline Beecham, was only effective for severe sufferers.

Shire's early start

Shire Pharmaceuticals is to make an early start on phase III trials of its treatment for high blood phosphate levels after a positive interim analysis of a phase II study. However, the application for US marketing approval for galantamine, its treatment for Alzheimer's disease, has been delayed to allow time to assemble a comprehensive filing dossier.

Gent stays away as MCI WorldCom enters the fray

CHRIS GENT, chief executive of Vodafone, is refusing to shorten his holiday in the antipodes despite fears yesterday that the mobile phone group's attempt to walk off with the US operator AirTouch looks set to be hijacked by a counter offer from MCI WorldCom.

The emergence of interest from MCI WorldCom means that AirTouch is now being pursued by three suitors having initially been close to concluding an agreement with Bell Atlantic. That number could rise to four as Wall Street is now also awaiting an offer for AirTouch from Mannesmann, the expanding German media group.

Bernie Ebbers, chief executive of MCI WorldCom and the man who broke up British Telecom's attempts to buy MCI two years ago, is said to have held meetings with advisers and bankers. Jack Grubman, the analyst at Salomon Smith Barney, who is close to Mr Ebbers, has raised his target price for AirTouch to $60 billion (£36 billion).

Mr Gent is understood to have dispatched Ken Hydon, his finance director, to San Francisco to initiate discussions for a £60 billion merger with AirTouch, which, if successful, could result in Vodafone becoming larger, by market capitalisation, than BT.


Ebbers: raised target price

Mr Gent, 50, a keen cricket fan who is in New Zealand after watching the end of the Test series in Australia, is expected to return to the UK at the weekend.

One company source said: "It's not as though [Mr Gent] is on safari. He's in contact. It's a situation he's been close to for the past 18 months, and there is game-plan in place. There's nothing he can do at this stage that the team can't."

Vodafone has not ruled out raising its bid, said by some to be as much as $55 million, while Bell Atlantic is thought to be unwilling to go much beyond the $45 billion it has already offered.

One Vodafone source, however, said: "There is a price at which we will walk away."

With the entry of Mr Ebbers, the scene is now set for a protracted bid battle.

Mr Ebbers is one of corporate America's most experienced artists in the takeover arena having prior to the MCI deal built up WorldCom through some 50 acquisitions. Mr Ebbers is seen by some as acting now toward AirTouch in much the same fashion as when he trumped BT in its $40 million takeover of MCI.

The move, however, stunned some analysts who said that he had previously stated that he had no interest in buying a mobile phone company.

Texaco to cut spending

TEXACO, the American oil company with significant interests in the North Sea, is to reduce capital spending in 1999 by $600 million (£364 million) to $3.7 billion from a planned $4.3 billion and accelerate a $650 million cost-cutting programme as a result of continued weak oil prices.

Peter Bijur, chairman and chief executive officer, said: "Given this period of low energy prices, our revised spending plan, together with our cost and expense-reduction programme, are appropriate actions."

UK businesses will suffer in wake of new currency

By Saeed Shah

UK companies are less prepared for the euro than their continental counterparts and will suffer as a result, according to a survey of UK and European equity analysts.

The study, by Deloitte Consulting, found that 43 per cent of UK analysts think companies in their sector do not have a clear view of how the euro will affect their business, compared with 27 per cent of European analysts.

Hans Christian Iversen, a partner at Deloitte, said: "UK companies especially have no plan and no allocated resources for adapting to the euro and are waiting for a government decision to join before they act.

"Unfortunately, UK companies cannot avoid the issue. Analysts are already factoring in the implications of the euro on their ratings of sectors and individual companies."

More than two thirds of UK analysts said companies in their sector had not made them explicitly aware of their euro strategies, compared with a third of European analysts.

The biggest area of concern for analysts is that companies have not resolved the pricing implications of the euro and, for UK analysts, the IT requirements of the euro.

In the short term, 85 per cent of both sets of analysts believe the euro will involve substantial costs to companies and 78 per cent think that margins will be damaged. However, in the medium term, 79 per cent of all analysts believe the euro will have a positive impact on the European business environment.

Strong trading for niche duo

By Sarah Cunningham, Retail Correspondent

TWO niche retailers, Clinton Cards and Electronics Boutique, reported strong Christmas trading yesterday.

Clinton Cards said it had enjoyed strong growth in sales over the festive season as cards remained a popular purchase with otherwise cautious shoppers. Like-for-like sales at the stores in the five weeks to January 3 rose 11.4 per cent, while total sales from Clinton's 518 shops was up 22.9 per cent.

The group was vague about trading at the 206 Greetings Store Group shops it took over last October, saying only that sales were "in line with the board's expectations". It said it will spend this year improving the layout of these shops and their stock ranges.

Electronics Boutique, which specialises in computer software and video games, said that its like-for-like sales rose 11 per cent, with total sales up 31 per cent on last year in the five key weeks to January 2.

John Steinbrecher, chief executive, said that Sony Playstation consoles had sold well, as had the *Fifa 99*, *Tomb Raider 3* and *Legend of Zelda* software titles.

Sims chief shuts down own office

THE chief executive of Sims Food, the supplier of burgers to Burger King, has effectively put himself out of work by deciding to close the company's head office (Sarah Cunningham writes).

Stephen Collier, brought in to run the company in 1995 after it was nearly sunk by the BSE crisis, said that the closure of the Milton Keynes office would save more than £500,000 a year. It will cost £300,000. Mr Collier also said that annual pre-tax profits will "substantially exceed market expectations".

Mr Collier will look for a new job when he leaves Sims at the end of March. The work done in Milton Keynes will be transferred to the factory in Hull, where Paul Harrison will become managing director.





Rush to take profits in wake of base rate cut

CITY investors are an ungrateful lot. Instead of celebrating the latest cut in bank base rates of a quarter point to 6 per cent, they saw it as a signal to take profits.

Despite the likelihood of more funds being earmarked for the stock market, the FTSE 100 index, which had been heavily tipped to hit a new record yesterday, appeared to run out of steam.

Prices fell sharply as the profit takers moved in although the worst losses of the day had been more than halved by the close. The FTSE *100 index closed 47.6 down at* 6,101.2 as 1.25 billion shares change hands. The FTSE 250 index rose 2.3 to 4,946.7.

Early losses in Germany and worries about the impact on Wall Street of the decision to freeze debt repayments in Brazil unsettled both traders and investors alike. Their fears were justified. An opening fall of almost 100 points in the Dow Jones industrial average was exacerbated by respected market strategist Abby Cohen of Goldman Sachs telling clients to reduce *the level of assets they commit* to the equity market.

Among leaders, brokers have begun the task of downgrading their profit numbers for **British Airways**, down 23½p to 388¼p, in the wake of Wednesday's weak traffic numbers. Commerzbank has slashed its profit forecast for the year to £225 million, which *compares with the consensus* of £300 million. HSBC Securities, the broker, says the shares are a "sell" and has slashed its forecast from £500 million to £350 million.

Profit downgrades also took their toll of **P&O**, down 38½p to 635p after a cautious trading update of its cruise division. Credit Suisse First Boston, the broker, downgraded on Wednesday, and WestLB Panmure, the company's broker, yesterday slashed its forecast for the year from £413 million to £396 million. It has also reduced for next time round by £30 million to £450 million.

Dresdner Kleinwort Benson, the broker, has been adding to its list of European stocks selected for 1999. This time it is **Gallaher**, which ended 5p dearer at 403¼p.

Albright & Wilson received a lukewarm reception to a downbeat trading statement issued after the close of business on Wednesday. The shares shed 3½p to a low of 59p.

Reuters retreated 2½p to 728p after Morgan Stanley Dean Witter lowered its recommendation for the shares from "strong buy" to "outperform". The US securities house made its move after the price surged above its 680p target price hav*ing outperformed the rest of* the market by 18.4 per cent during the past month. But Reuters remains its favourite media stock. It has now raised its target price to 800p.

The recent strong run in **Energis** came to a grinding halt with the price dropping 115p to £14.20 after Morgan Stanley again cut its recommendation from "strong buy" to "outper*form*". *However, the broker* has taken a shine to **Tesco**, 5½p dearer at 169¾p, after moving from "outperform" to "strong buy".

House of Fraser firmed ½p to 58p in a falling market as almost two million shares were traded amid claims that Philip Green was building up a stake. It was reported last month that Mr Green had been attempting to raise the necessary finance to launch a bid worth 350p a share for rival **Sears**, 2½p easier at 254p.

Liberty, the department store group, has begun clawing its way back off the bottom with a rise of 22½p to 155p *amid fresh claims that the company* is ripe for a takeover. The price has plunged from a peak of 355p last year, but the shares are tightly held and traders will normally only make a price in 500 at a time.

Telspec raced up 5p to 39p leading to suggestions that Colin Blackbourne at Shaw & Co, the broker, had been adding to his holding in the company.

Speculative buying pushed **Polypipe** 4p higher to 123½p in a falling market. Shaw & Co was reckoned to have led the buyers. It has resulted in *claims that someone may be* stakebuilding since the recovery from last year's low of 95½p.

One of the better performances from the lower echelons came from **Tarsus Group**, up 12p, or 24 per cent, to 62p in a 500 share market. Charles Stanley, the broker, was behind the move having rated the shares a "buy".

□ **GILT-EDGED:** There was a positive response to the latest cut in base rates with investors supporting prices across the yield curve. The best gains were seen at the shorter end which is usually more interest-rate sensitive.

A conversion notice has been published on Treasury 12½ per cent 2003/05 into Treasury 6½ per cent 2003. In the futures pit, the March series of the long gilt put on 30p at £119.46 as 26,000 contracts were completed. Among conventional issues, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 put on 35p at £151.45, while in shorts Treasury 7 per cent 2002 rose 32p to £107.83.

□ **NEW YORK:** US investors took fright at developments in Brazil and warnings of an overvalued market. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was down 52.78 points to 9,492.19.



Bob Ayling, chief executive of British Airways, which fell 23½p to 388¼p as brokers began to downgrade profits

STILL RINGING ALL THE RIGHT NUMBERS

FTSE 350 Telecommunications; FTSE all-share index (rebased). Source: Datastream. Scale 2,000–6,500; Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan

THE telecom companies have been ringing red hot in recent weeks. Far from expecting the party to end abruptly, Lehman Brothers, the US securities house, is confident further progress can be achieved in 1999.

Paul Norris at Lehman remains upbeat about the sector generally and has rolled over his valuation targets to next December.

Despite his comments, profit taking was inevitable, with British Telecom dropping 21½p to 990p, Cable & Wireless 34p to 814p, Orange 12½p to 896p, and Vodafone 13½p to £10.75½.

Mr Norris's favourite naps for 1999 are Vodafone, among the mobile phone operators, where he has set a target price of £12, and Cable & Wireless, among the fixed-line operators, where he is looking for 960p. Other year-end targets include 970p for BT, 850p for Orange and 640p for Securicor.

The industry should benefit from consolidation, the surge in mobile subscribers and the early stages of the data revolution.

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	9492.19 (-52.78)
S&P Composite	1266.67 (-3.87)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	13536.58 (+88.10)
Hong Kong:	
Hang Seng	10693.57 (+459.77)
Amsterdam:	
AEX Index	561.08 (-22.58)
Sydney:	
AO	2897.3 (+43.9)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	5323.21 (-120.41)
Singapore:	
Straits	1517.88 (+52.91)
Brussels:	
BEL20	3808.86 (-00.00)
Paris:	
CAC-40	4230.67 (-64.15)
Zurich:	
SKA Gen	1381.70 (-66.20)
London:	
FT 30	3632.6 (-37.0)
FTSE 100	6101.2 (-47.6)
FTSE 250	4946.7 (+2.3)
FTSE 350	2887.8 (-18.8)
FTSE Eurotop 100	2894.27 (-29.85)
FTSE All-Share	2764.57 (-16.74)
FTSE Non Financials	2814.63 (-15.95)
FTSE Fixed Interest	157.58 (+0.02)
FTSE Govt Secs	116.37 (+0.22)
Bargains	88552
SEAQ Volume	1256.0m
US$	1.6496 (-0.0064)
Euro	0.7074 (-0.0003)
Exchange Index	99.0 (-0.2)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
ESDR	1.1773
RPI	164.4 Nov (3.0%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	162.0 Nov (2.5%) Jan 1987=100

AIM VCT	100		...
Abbey Natl Dublin Inv	91½		...
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Cap	90	+	½
BFS O'seas Inc & Gwth Inc	119½	+	½
Charriol	117½		...
Collective Assets Trust	117		...
Financial Objects	264	−	1
First Active	349½	−	1
Five Arrws Uts Cv Ln 2040	119¾	+	¾
Marley B	11		...
Natl Bldg Mills Cv Pf	105		...
Natural Building Mills	5		...
Piccadilly Growth Ts	97		...
REXAM B (100)	96		...
Singer & Frd AIM VCT	100		...
Willington	77½		...
Xenova Warrants	13½		...
Yeoman II Equity Units	96	−	½
Yeoman II Inv Tst Cap	7¼		...
Yeoman II Inv Tst Inc	89½	+	½
Yeoman II Zero Div Pf	107¼	+	¼

EMAP n/p (875)	205	+	6
Recognition Systems n/p (9)	5¼	+	1
SKD Media n/p (15)	1¼		...

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Aspen Grp	42	+ 13	+ 44.8
Partners	26½	+ 6½	+ 32.5
Tarsus	62	+ 12	+ 24.0
Wembley	367½	+ 55	+ 17.6
Liberty	155	+ 22½	+ 16.9
Telspec	39	+ 5	+ 14.7
Brent Chems	93½	+ 11½	+ 14.0
Swfld-Rva	300	+ 35	+ 13.2
Calderburn	45	+ 5	+ 12.5
Skg & Leisure	192	+ 20½	+ 11.9
Adscene	150	+ 16	+ 11.9

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Limelight	25½	− 5½	− 17.7
Highams Sys	63	− 12	− 16.0
Chesterton Int	15	− 2	− 11.7
Utd Biscuits	210	− 27	− 11.3
Pace Micro	88½	− 9	− 9.2
Burn Stewart	16	− 1½	− 8.5
Orbis	27	− 2½	− 8.4
Utd Carriers	27	− 2½	− 8.4
Swallowfield	53	− 4½	− 7.8
Energis	1420	−115	− 7.4
MMT Comp	780	− 60	− 7.1
AFA Systems	99	− 7½	− 7.0

Called to account

THE £116 million nasty let loose yesterday will not significantly dent Barclays Bank's profits, nor its overall financial strength. The root of the payment is also buried in ancient history, and it would be wrong to draw conclusions from the settlement about today's company. It is unfair, also, to pin blame for the cost on Martin Taylor, the recently departed chief executive. Suggestions that Mr Taylor should have got shot of the liability when he sold BZW are wide of the mark. Criticise the sale, perhaps, but no buyer in its right mind would have taken on the B&C liability.

The news did initially knock Barclays shares yesterday, although they recovered most of the early losses in later trading. But the continuing bearishness about Barclays is caused by the bank's enduring reputation for being accident prone, not because the payment to B&C creditors will actually hurt the bank's investors. Yes, Barclays shares did rise strongly on Wednesday. But most big shares did well that day, and the Barclays price was helped by heavy buying of shares by bear traders rushing to cover short positions.

Barclays remains in an invidious position. Yesterday's interest rate *cut may help the bad* debt outlook in this country but economies and corporates worldwide are weakened. Little good can come until a successor to Mr Taylor is identified. New top brass will also strive *to find a short* cut to prosperity, and enhanced shareholder value. This will not be easy, since the quick-fix solution of splitting the commercial and retail sides of the bank appears to have been discredited.

Shares in Barclays should be held but investors may have to wait for outperformance.

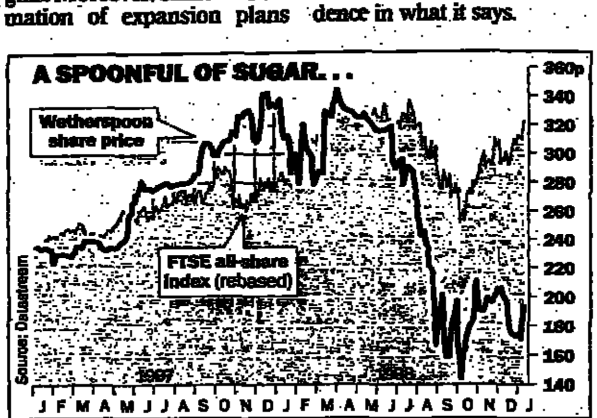
J D Wetherspoon

J D WETHERSPOON, the pub operator, seems remarkably keen to keep its shareholders informed. Clear communication is praiseworthy but recent remarks from this group are not all that they seem. Either that or the market is worryingly forgetful.

Market reaction to upbeat comments on trading sent the *shares up nearly 12 per cent* yesterday. The stock was the best performer in the FTSE 350. At the very end of last year Wetherspoon also informed investors that it was splurging money on new pub openings. Both snippets are all very well. But they come as no surprise to attentive investors who learnt at the time of Wetherspoon's annual results presentation in September that the company was in bullishly expansionist mood.

It would be perfectly understandable if Wetherspoon's management wanted to improve sentiment: the shares now trade 42 per cent below a peak hit last March. But this week's news of good trading came with a sting in the tail. Suggestions are that the strong sales were only won at the cost of thinner profit margins. Moreover, earlier confirmation of expansion plans may sound beneficial but at a time of slowing consumer confidence, when Wetherspoon's debt burden is relatively high, the effect may not be entirely positive.

Perhaps yesterday marked the start, but genuine recovery will only come when the market learns from the company's utterances, and can have confidence in what it says.



Goode Durrant

SHARES in Goode Durrant took a battering in 1998, falling from 601p in March to 235p in October. Investor nerves have steadied a little, however, and despite reporting lower inrterim profits yesterday the shares bobbed up again.

The former mini-conglomerate is now solely in the sale and hire of commercial vehicles. That focus brought Goode Durrant popularity, but the company has recently suffered as the residual value of ex-hire vehicles slumped.

The worst effects of this seem to be over now and prices have stabilised. Moreover, Goode Durrant has put measures in place to deal with the deflation. It has adjusted its depreciation policy and is also using its vehicles for longer before resale.

The effects of these changes will not be seen until the next financial year, but the company is continuing to grow in terms of revenue and fleet size. This is a market with great prospects as companies become increasingly keen on efficient use of balance sheet capital. In the US 28 per cent of commercial vehicles are rented — rather than owned outright — but in the UK the figure is still only 8 per cent.

Shares are currently trading at a little under ten times forecast earnings. Ongoing residual price problems are likely to last at least another six months, justifying the lowish rating for now, but there is considerable potential for growth in the longer term.

Reg Vardy

THE intractability of selling new vehicles is one reason why Goode Durrant is moving quickly towards leasing. But Reg Vardy is holding a hopeful candle amid the gloom that engulfs so many of the Arthur Daley types.

Yesterday Vardy reported a 46 per cent jump in profits on the same day that the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders told of a 9 per cent fall in volumes industry-wide. Moreover, Vardy's success comes at a time of new car price deflation.

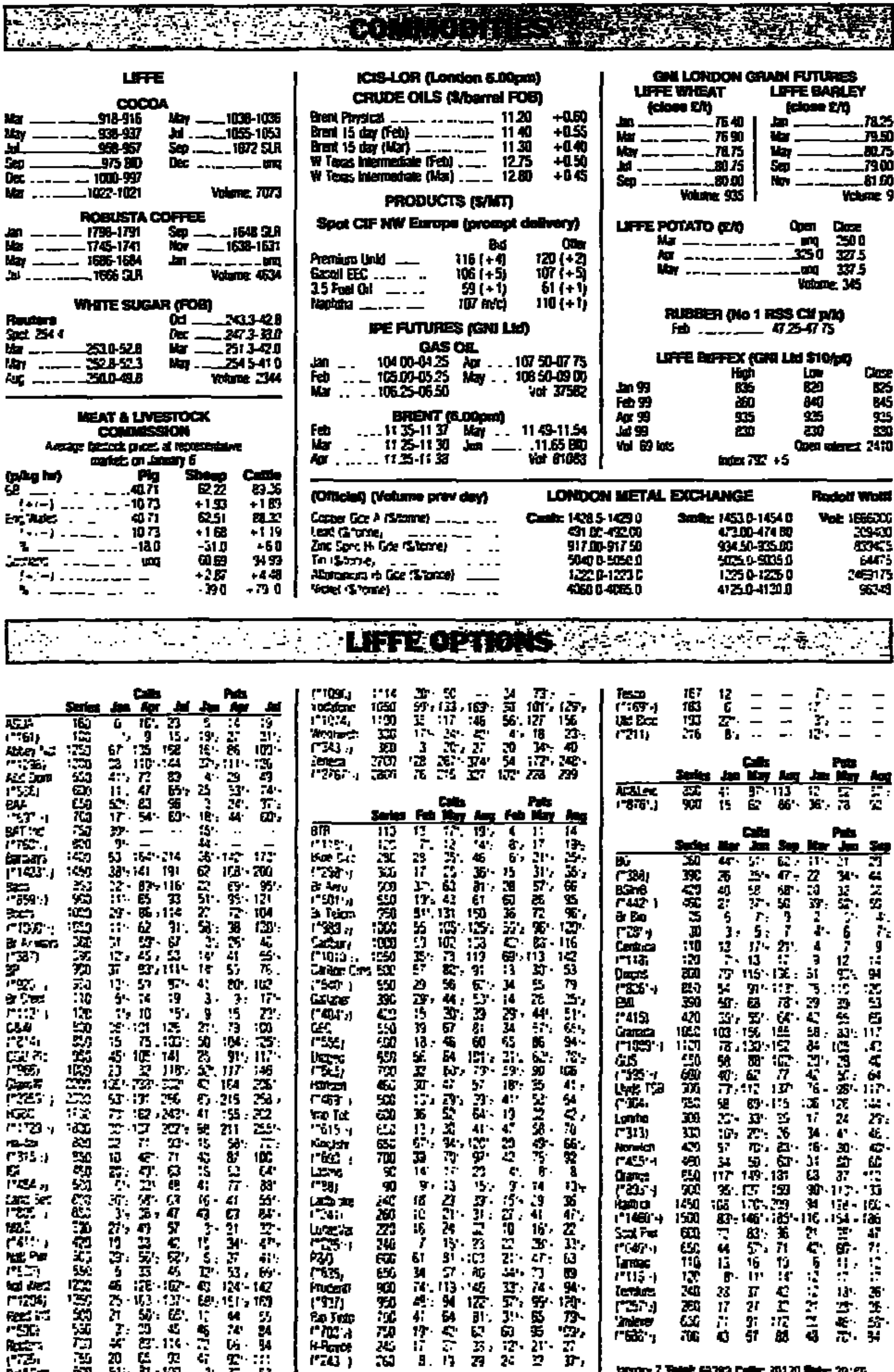
The Vardy secret lies in stock management. Its cars are usually shifted inside 30 days, and the shortness of the stocking chain means Vardy can keep up with lower new car prices without sacrificing profit margin.

Its growing authority in the second-hand market — which has come with last year's acquisitions — also gives Vardy power in negotiating with rental companies, flogging their ex-hire stock. And you only need to look back at Goode Durrant to see the impact of that.

At 190p its shares deserve far better than their sector rating of 6.1 times forecast earnings. There is also much more immediate value here than in Goode Durrant. Buy.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE

COMMODITIES



LIFFE

COCOA

Mar	918-916	May	1038-1036
May	938-937	Jul	1055-1053
Jul	958-957	Sep	1072 SLR
Sep	975 BD	Dec	unq
Dec	1000-997		

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm) CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	11.20	+0.60
Brent 15 day (Feb)	11.40	+0.55
Brent 15 day (Mar)	11.30	+0.40
W Texas Intermediate (Feb)	12.75	+0.50
W Texas Intermediate (Mar)	12.80	+0.45

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Jan	76.40	Jan	78.25
Mar	76.90	Mar	79.50
May	78.75	May	80.75
Jul	80.75	Sep	79.00
Sep	80.80	Nov	81.60

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Mar 99	119.26	119.70	119.15	119.46	32689
Previous open interest 104262	Jun 99				119.46	0
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Mar 99				116.65	0
Previous open interest 0						
Five Year Gilt	Mar 99				108.43	0
Previous open interest 75	Jun 99				108.43	0
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Mar 99	*114.85*	*115.08*	*114.64*	*114.67*	9904
Previous open interest 35746						
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Mar 99	131.56	131.56	130.83	131.06	4349
	Jun 99				129.96	0
Three Mth Sterling	Mar 99	94.400	94.510	94.400	94.490	79040
	Jun 99	94.790	94.970	94.790	94.950	67650
Previous open interest 1034693	Sep 99	94.930	95.090	94.930	95.080	52278
Three Mth Euromark	Jan 99	96.815	96.815	96.810	96.810	2346
Previous open interest 2340016	Jun 99	97.020	97.055	97.005	97.045	58319
Three Mth Eurolira	Mar 99	96.890	96.920	96.830	96.910	1300
Previous open interest 496253	Jun 99	97.020	97.060	97.020	97.045	149
Three Mth Euroswiss	Mar 99	98.430	98.530	98.420	98.520	22561
Previous open interest 136764	Jun 99	98.320	98.410	98.310	98.410	4003
Three Mth Euro	Jan 99				96.810	0
Previous open interest [illegible]	Jun 99				97.045	0
FTSE 100	Mar 99	6195.0	6210.0	6070.0	6150.0	29933
Previous open interest 193634	Jun 99				6193.0	0

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 6 Finance House 7
Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 8 Low 5½ Week fixed: 6½
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth 5¾, 3 mth 5⅝. Sell: 2 mth 5⅝, 3 mth 5½

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	6¼-6	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Overnight: open [illegible] close [illegible]					
Local Authority Deps:	[illegible]	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	4.93	n/a	4.93	4.93	n/a
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro:	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	3ds-3pr
Yen:	—	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1-par
Canada:		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open: $[illegible] **Close:** $289.70-290.20 **High:** $290.00-290.40 **Low:** $[illegible] **AM:** $288.60 **PM:** $289.95

Krugerrand: $[illegible] (£176.00-178.00)

Platinum: $[illegible] **Silver:** $5.345 (£3.175) **Palladium:** $315.00 (£190.80)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for January 7	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	10.504-10.550	10.514-10.527	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro	1.4126-1.4146	1.4130-1.4141	0.15-0.13ds	0.46-0.49ds
Montreal	2.4874-2.4968	2.4936-2.4961	0.28-0.21pr	0.68-0.54pr
New York	1.6484-1.6524	1.6494-1.6500	0.153-0.132pr	0.375-0.345pr
Oslo	12.183-12.251	12.236-12.249	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stockholm	13.004-13.070	13.008-13.021	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tokyo	182.58-183.88	183.23-183.46	[illegible]	[illegible]
Zurich	2.2830-2.2909	2.2846-2.2871	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds

Australia	1.5795-1.5807
Canada	1.5090-1.5100
Denmark	6.3730-6.3770
Euro	1.1674-1.1684
Hong Kong	7.7480-7.7485
Japan	111.01-111.11
Malaysia	3.7998-3.8001
Norway	7.4190-7.4240
Singapore	1.6705-1.6715
Sweden	7.8835-7.8885
Switzerland	1.3849-1.3859

Argentina peso*	1.6486-1.6509
Australia dollar	2.6041-2.6098
Bahrain dinar	0.6175-0.6315
Brazil real*	1.9888-1.9913
Cyprus pound	0.8235-0.8415
Euro	1.4105-1.4129
Finland markka	8.3925-8.5275
Greece drachma	456.00-466.40
Hong Kong dollar	12.7718-12.7804
India rupee	69.66-71.26
Indonesia rupiah	12952.0-13232.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4920-0.5030
Malaysia ringgit	6.2640-6.2664
New Zealand dollar	3.0447-3.0505
Pakistan rupee	80.70 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.9625-6.0975
Singapore dollar	2.7528-2.7578
S Africa rand (com)	9.3950-9.6130
U A E dirham	6.0175-6.1535

Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

3i	2,204	Legal & Gn	2,271
ASDA Gp	11,267	Lloyds TSB	12,385
Abbey Ntl	4,545	LucasVarity	4,411
Allnce & Leic	2,495	Marks Spr	7,074
Allied Dom	2,436	Nat Grid	7,156
Allied Zrch	12,022	Nat Power	6,104
Arjowiggins	2,812	NatWst Bk	6,327
AB Foods	665	Norwich Un	9,938
Bk of Scot	5,231	Orange	4,618
BAA	2,370	P & O	5,269
Barclays	8,089	Pearson	2,365
Bass	21,756	PowerGen	4,804
BG	12,415	Prudential	2,290
Billiton	837	Railtrack	2,441
BOC	1,943	Reckitt Col	888
Boots	2,157	Reed Intl	4,987
BP Amoco	35,960	Rentokil	5,492
BAe	10,716	Reuters	6,479
BA	5,098	Rio Tinto	7,225
Brt Am Tob	3,177	Rolls Royce	6,095
Brit Energy	2,055	Ryl & Sun	10,544
BSkyB	3,156	Ryl Bk Sct	8,250
BT	17,684	Safeway	1,625
BTR	12,293	Sainsbury	2,626
CGU	2,642	Schroders	348
COLT Telecom	2,416	Scot & New	16,387
Cable Wire	8,223	Scot Sthn Engy	3,255
Cadbury	2,387	Scot Power	3,877
Carlton Cms	1,202	Securicor	1,526
Centrica	27,863	Sevn Trent	3,342
Compass Gp	5,749	Shell Trans	15,402
Diageo	6,704	Siebe	6,280
Dixons Grp	7,099	Smiths Ind	385
EMI	1,631	SmKl Bch	11,130
Gallaher	1,470	Stagecoach	3,508
Gen Elec	5,404	Std Chartd	4,744
GKN	849	Sun Life	416
Glaxo Well	10,135	TeleWest	47,932
Granada	1,312	Tesco	26,832
GUS	3,205	Thames W	398
GRE	2,003	Tomkins	14,705
Hanson	1,014	Unilever	6,513
ICI	2,860	Utd News	1,431
Imperial Tob	645	Utd Utilities	3,083
HSBC	6,217	Vodafone	24,114
Halifax	3,115	WPP	5,631
Hays	3,496	Whitbread	1,001
Kingfisher	5,160	Williams	4,056
Ladbroke	3,381	Woolwich	4,192
Land Secs	2,780	Zeneca	2,982

	Jan 7 midday	Jan 6 close		Jan 7 midday	Jan 6 close		Jan 7 midday	Jan 6 close
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

LIFFE OPTIONS

[illegible]

Mid-rank ministers are key to success

It is hard to remember in these post-Mandelson days that it was once the Department of Social Security that provided the Government with its biggest headache. Harriet Harman, the former Secretary of State for Social Security, quickly acquired a reputation as an ineffectual minister. Frank Field, the independent-minded MP brought in to "think the unthinkable" on pensions and welfare reform, was at constant loggerheads with the Treasury over his ideas. After a full year in Government, Labour had made no progress on fulfilling one of its main *manifesto commitments, leaving* the pensions and insurance industry complaining bitterly that the Government was going round in circles.

Last summer, the axe finally fell and Ms Harman and Mr Field became the highest-profile victims of Tony Blair's reshuffle. In stepped Alistair Darling, fresh from the Treasury. Progress started to be made and by December the long-awaited pensions reform Green Paper was published. *The discussion document calls for* the abolition of the state earnings-related pension and its replacement with a second state pension for the very low paid. Middle earners are to be encouraged — but not compelled — to take out private provision while tax perks for upper earners have been left untouched.

So far, so good. The reform plans, while not quite living up to the hype of a radical overhaul of the pensions system, were relatively well received. *Mr Darling* was able to put the plans aside and turn his attention to the next tricky task of welfare reform.

Yet the Green Paper is far from the finished product. Senior ministers naturally want to revel in the excitement of a new policy and then move on. Most of governance, however, is the tedious job of turning these plans into legislative and executive reality. A failure to complete the de*tails has damaging practical consequenc*es for business and consumers, effectively introducing "policy blight" into the system. The very real long-term consequences of failing to turn broad-brush reforms into hard policy are likely to prove far more damaging than the *fall-out from feuding spin-doctors.*

[...]S OF POLITICS

ALASDAIR MURRAY

The pensions reform plans are just such a case. The Green Paper indicates that smaller companies that do not offer company pension plans will have to provide access to stakeholder pensions. Employers will be landed with extra costs, but with no clear expression of how this proposal will work in practice, there is little they can do in the way of preparation.

The plans have had a negative impact on the pensions industry itself. The Government, by announcing the introduction of high-standard stakeholder pensions, has made it extremely difficult to sell existing pensions. Not surprisingly, consumers are reluctant to rush into such a fundamental financial commitment when a greatly improved product may be available in the near future. At the same time, there has been insufficient guidance on the style of the new stakeholder pensions for the industry to begin the complex task of designing new products. The pension companies are especially taxed by the idea of a capped maximum charge rate. They argue it will hurt their bottom lines to such a degree that the reform will prove counterproductive and force companies out of the middle earnings pension market.

It is not Alistair Darling, however, who has the vital task of resolving these problems but Stephen Timms, the newly appointed Minister of State for Welfare Reform. The new *Pensions Minister* is hardly a household name. His previous claim to fame was winning the East Ham by-election in 1994 with a remarkable 75 per cent of the vote after his Liberal Demo*crat opponent defected to Labour on the* eve of the poll.

A committed Christian, he was also an unusual target for attention in the wake of Derek Draper's fall from grace last year. His researcher may have connections with Whitefield Associations, a lobby group, but offering advice to a variety of Christian groups is unlikely to result in a significant conflict of interest.

For all Mr Timms's anonymity, it has been a remarkably swift rise for a man regarded as a staunch Blairite loyalist. He *only entered the Government in the last* full reshuffle when he was made Junior Minister at the DSS. He has now become an indirect beneficiary of the fall-out from the Mandelson scandal, filling the vacancy left by John Denham, who has moved to become Health Minister.

Fine-tuning the details on pension reform does not seem like a sure-fire way of making further progress to the top. However, if Labour is serious about putting substance first, it is the performance of the mid-ranking ministers that should become a main focus of attention.

For pension reform, the omens are good. Mr Timms has a private sector *background, having worked for Logica,* the computer company. He oversaw the awarding of the huge £7 billion benefits agency computer contract. Civil servants and trade association representatives describe him as competent and hard working. The Government needs the Timmses as much as the Mandelsons, if it is safely to steer through the tricky mid-term years.

Buffeted boat industry stays buoyant in face of stormy sea

UK builders are at full throttle to attract a new wave of buyers, says **Kimberly McDonald**

Pop stars do it. Footballers do it. Even the Prince of Wales tried it. Now the UK boating industry is following suit and undergoing its own makeover attempt.

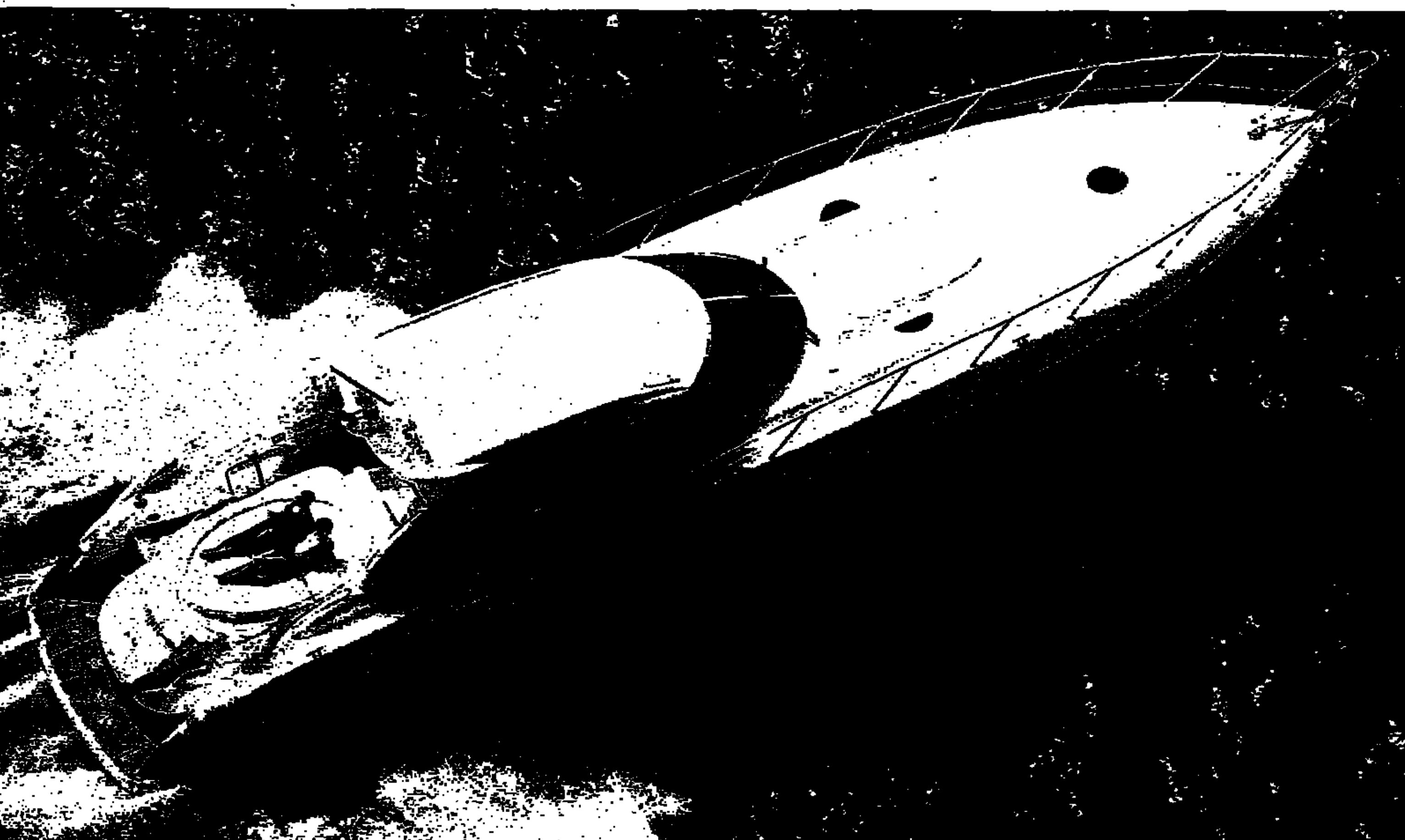
Once a highly coveted symbol of wealth and glamour, boating began to nosedive a *few years ago. Women didn't* want to know about boats and young people shied away from a pastime with an image suggesting gin and tonics and [/3 DROP]*Howard's Way*. Last year, the British Marine Industries Federation (BMIF) listed 180 pastimes, from parascending to Zen Buddhism, to which boating was losing ground.

The high pound during 1998 caused a serious blow to exports and the business sentiment among boat builders and equipment suppliers was extreme pessimism.

The tone at this year's London International Boat Show, which opened at Earls Court yesterday, is notably more optimistic. The pound has retreated *to more* reasonable levels, prompting an increase in sales. Last September was a turning-point for the industry, and sales late last year picked up 10 per cent, with export orders 40 per cent *higher in the latter part of* 1998 compared to early 1998.

Boating equipment sales, that declined 14 per cent in 1997, have increased in the second half of 1998. That has done much to spur optimism in the UK industry, despite an expected economic slowdown.

In its latest biannual industry trends survey, the BMIF, which organises *the London Boat* Show, reports that its members, whilst being prepared for a drop in consumer confidence and spending, are more optimistic about the market as a whole than they were in the previous six months, with exporters being particularly upbeat about the future. The UK's big powerboat manufacturers, such as Fairline, Princess and Sunseeker, seem to be holding on to their European sales.



Full steam ahead: the UK industry is targeting first-time buyers with entry-level boats to complement sales of vessels such as this Sunseeker Predator 63

But the industry still faces many challenges. Topper International, one of the best known names in British yachting, and Victoria-Yacht, had to withdraw from the Boat Show because of financial difficulties. Despite being a regular fixture at the show, Topper's continuing *financial troubles* and the company's voluntary arrangement with creditors to avoid receivership, prevented its participation this year.

While boat builders take some solace in the home market, the high pound is still hurting profits at the main British builders, who rely heavily on exports. *The damage is twofold: making their products* more expensive in overseas markets; and attracting cheap imports from Europe and the US to compete with them on home territory. The greatest competition comes from France, where well-made cheaper boats are becoming a force to be reckoned with.

"On a value basis, it's hard for customers to ignore the sailboats from France," said Tony Beechey, executive chairman of BMIF. UK manufacturers also have little scope to lower prices.

"There is a strong element of realism that many companies, while continuing plans for capital expenditure and investment, expect to have to increase their prices in the next six months," Mr Beechey said.

In America, home of the world's biggest boat industry, sales have trailed off slightly. While recreational spending has grown by more than 50 per cent in seven years, boating's share has shrunk from 3.8 per cent to 2.1 per cent. A recent US report showed that, in 1984, owning a boat came sixth on a "wish list" of consumer prefer*ences. Fourteen years later, it* came 15th.

With domestic interest on the wane, US companies are intensifying their overseas focus, posing a serious competitive challenge for British builders, particularly in the sportsboat market. US sports boats are built in huge numbers, so quantity keeps prices down. These boats are not only stylish but also cheaper, given the pound's current level, hurting Britain's main sports builders such as Fletcher and Shakespeare. Fighting competitive pricing is one thing.

Fighting *old perceptions* is another. Attendance at the Boat Show is expected to run at least 10 per cent above last year's level, but a survey of seven boat shows on three continents indicates a steady *decline in inter*est. Over six years, more than 150,000 people decided to give their local show a miss.

In addition to changing perceptions, customer spending patterns have shifted as well. Boat designs have become standardised, allowing higher-volume production. *Standardisation* means that designs do not date so quickly and resale values remain high. So owners keep their boats longer, with more of them upgrading the kit and rigging of their craft.

For younger families, boating is far too time-consuming and expensive. Over 30 years, the price of a small cruiser has risen by more than double the inflation rate. Seadogs, consequently, are getting older: 46 per cent of sailors and 35 per cent of motor boat users are aged over 55.

*With these disheartening de*mographics as a backdrop, the BMIF launched its new Big Blue brand for all national boat shows. The "Big Blue Experience" makes its debut this year, and features a host of promotions, from fashion shows to watersports simulators, to create and attract a new generation of watersports enthusiasts.

Forget the image of stodgy seafarers, said Colin Campbell of Big Blue: "The Experience will be run by enthusiastic young boaters whose aim is to prove that boating has some*thing to offer people of all ages.*"

The industry is changing the way it does business, focusing more sharply on the customers' needs and individualised service.

*Doing whatever it takes to re*tain customers and interest is crucial for the boating industry, which cannot afford to lose its loyal UK customer base. Unlike motorists, boat owners overwhelmingly buy British, with 85 per cent of new boats purchased from UK yards. While more than two thirds of boat sales are in the second-hand market, *more people are being drawn* into buying new as the supply of good quality second-hand craft starts to dry up. Builders are praying this trend continues.

Though the sign outside the *BMIF reads* "Wanted: Young People", it is the sophisticated Monte Carlo cruisers who have been the loyal buyers, not the more fickle younger generation. After all, with a top-of-the-range Sunseeker running at £2 million and even the more moderate fly-bridge cruisers from top builders such as Fairline, Marine Projects, and Sealine, costing upwards of £200,000, it's clear who the target audience is. But, there's a more concerted effort this year to attract first-time buyers with affordable good-value entry-level boats.

If value doesn't work, the BMIF is throwing in young models dancing under bright lights on a smoke-filled stage. Just in case.

High-flyer brought down over Atlantic

Jason Nissé on John Gunn's efforts to keep his career afloat after the collapse of B&C

It is hardly much consolation. But more than ten years after making the decision that ruined his career, John Gunn believes he has proof that he was duped.

The former chairman of British & Commonwealth Holdings has long borne the responsibility for B&C's £408 million purchase of Atlantic Computers, the leasing group, in 1988. That deal led within *two years to the £1.3 billion* collapse of B&C, one of the largest financial disasters in British corporate history. This in turn led to a Department of Trade and Industry investigation, and an attempt to have Gunn struck off as a director, which led to a court case that Gunn, along with Rusty Ashman, B&C's finance director, *and John Penny, Atlantic's* sales director, won last June.

The settlement of the long-standing and complex legal action over the Atlantic deal lays the blame squarely at the feet of BZW (now Barclays Capital) and Coopers & Lybrand (now Pricewaterhouse-Coopers), which advised B&C, and Spicer & Oppenheim (now Deloitte & Touche) and NM Rothschild (which thankfully has not been bought, merged or changed its name), Atlantic's auditors and merchant bankers. Though they ad*mit no liability in the settle*ments, Gunn argues that if these venerable City firms had not given Atlantic a clean bill of health in 1988 (when it was already becoming apparent that it was built on foundations of straw) B&C would never have bought it

It also means that a large proportion of B&C creditors' *will be paid dividends of 100p* in the pound, *something that* Gunn says proves his argument that B&C should never have been put into administration in the first place.

*It is a rather pyrrhic victo*ry for Gunn, who celebrates his 57th birthday next week. "My emotions are a bit mixed," he said. "It's clear at the time the decision to pull the plug was a *mistake*. It has ruined a lot of shareholders and ruined a lot of people's lives."

Certainly Gunn's career was not helped. The son of the Cheshire railwayman worked his way up through the foreign exchange department of Barclays Bank and the world of moneybroking, *and was a City high-flyer* when the Atlantic deal was struck. He had left Exco, the moneybroker, in 1986 to take charge of B&C, which was then an investment vehicle for the Cayzer family. In just a few years he transformed it into the UK's largest financial services conglomerate. He earned nearly £1 million a *year and purchased* a huge home in Holland Park, known for its ballroom.

Gunn stayed with B&C for a year or so after its collapse, helping the administators, Nigel Hamilton and Stephen Adamson, of Ernst & Young, to sell the main businesses, which included Gartmore and Oppenheim & Co, the fund *managers*, Celltech, the biotechnology start-up, and Exco, Gunn's old business. Adamson has always been complimentary about Gunn, supporting him in his fight *against the DTI and admit*ting that Ernst & Young advised the banks against pulling the plug on B&C.

Gunn has rebuilt his career after a fashion. Though the DTI action prevented him from joining the board of Chelsea Village, owner of the Premiership football club, *subsequent events there have made this a* blessing in disguise. He now runs a small merchant bank, but is not registered with the Securities & Futures Authori*ty. Another case of regulators* blaming him for B&C? No. "I just thought I was a bit old to take the exams," he said.

Italian job

THE latest horse-trading in euroland looks set to put a Frenchman in charge of the powerful Economic and Finance Committee, which used to trade as the plain old Monetary Committee, to succeed Sir Nigel Wicks, Gordon Brown's main man in the EU. Wicks has stood down as chairman, and Jean Lemierre, a French Treasury civil servant, is expected to take over at this month's meeting.

This being the EU, the whole thing is the result of a shabby carve-up, inevitably. Mario Draghi, head of the Italian Treasury, was up for the job, but the rumour is that he has decided to withdraw in return for French support for an Italian in an even bigger EU post.

Jacques Santer may stand down this year as head of the Commission, and the man with his eye on this job is Romano Prodi, former Italian Prime Minister. The Italians rather hope the French can deliver the job.

If Lemierre gets to take over this would be some consolation for the failure of Jean-Claude Trichet to take over the European Central Bank, my source says. The incumbent president, Wim Duisenberg, recently refused to go early, you may recall.

I am told, however, that Trichet was never in the running. The talk is that the Governor of the Bank of France is too heavily implicated in the collapse of the Crédit Lyonnais bank, so all the fuss over him succeeding Duisenberg was a smoke-screen.

What a shower.



"I'll move a quarter of a per cent — that's a significant amount for you"

BAD luck to Stephen Adamson, corporate recovery guru at Ernst & Young, who for five years has pursued those responsible for the collapse of British & Commonwealth on behalf of the creditors. The final settlement with Barclays Bank and the rest was at last announced yesterday, and he was in Thailand.

Sunning himself on the beach?



Alas, not. Adamson has been charged with clearing up after the collapse of the state-owned timber corporation.

Mapped out

AS ONE who shares his passion for maps, I can only admire the 20 years of effort by Philip Wood, head of the banking department at City lawyers Allen & Overy, that went into *Maps of World Financial Law*, a slim but colourful volume that shows how the 300 or more jurisdictions around the globe view various transactions.

The 27 maps are in full colour and are clearly a labour of love — Wood says he enjoyed the colouring in, even if this was achieved by computer rather than crayon. "For people who are trying to do deals worldwide, it's a nightmare," he says.

He is particularly proud of Map 27, on global netting, which shows your chances of recovering a debt against a matching liability in various countries, the product of two decades of globe-trotting research. Memo: avoid the Middle East, Africa and Latin America.

Drug-crazed

MOST pharmaceutical research notes might as well be written in Estonian as far as I am concerned. So I felt a twinge of sympathy for whoever was responsible for Shire Pharmaceuticals' update on its treatment for high phosphate levels in the blood.

Some sort of computer glitch meant that the research team's notes were garbled and then squirted down the line instead of the finished version. "(Compare to normal levels of phosphate found in the blood?)" it says at one point, along with various other esoteric stage directions.

I ask if the finished version made any more sense. "Probably," comes the answer. "Almost definitely."

THE clock is ticking for the Heathrow 19, plus guinea pig. Mario Avagliano pleaded guilty to importing the beasts and to charges of cruelty to animals yesterday and was jailed for six weeks and fined £1,000. Readers of yesterday's column will know that the animals are at the Corporation of London's reception centre at Heathrow, waiting to serve six months in quarantine.

The end of the trial now means they can be destroyed in eight days' time because they have already been behind bars for a week. Something must be done, and quick.

Money talks

I HAVE been sent a copy of the latest new year's card from the Association of *French Banks to their members*. It celebrates the birth of the euro with a map of Europe that features a sheaf of the new banknotes obliterating most of *La Belle France*. Furthermore, they have used an old map that refers to their German partners, rather militaristically, you might think, as Prussia. What are they trying to say?

MARTIN WALLER



Bismarck: fondly remembered, it seems, by the French banks

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
AIB GOVETT UNIT TRUST LTD				
0171 378 7979 Dealing: 0171 407 7888				
Protected Funds				
UK Safeguard	143.55	152.96	- 0.66	
-do- NAV ap Jun 19	135.00	136.00		
UK Equity Safeguard	114.13	122.06	- 1.69	2.02
-do- NAV to Mar 19	110.98	110.98		...
US Eqy Safeguard	95.92	107.97	+ 0.86	...
Cash	958.16	962.95		6.25
UK Growth Funds				
UK Equity Gen	439.16	465.51	+ 0.33	1.80
UK Small Cos	82.73	88.48	- 0.45	0.50
FTSE 250 Index	99.67	106.81	- 3.50	1.89
Geared UK Index	#24.845	#26.238	- 0.51	5.75
Income Funds				
Corp Bd	87.96	90.80	+ 0.07	6.66
Monthly Inc	44.20	47.26†	+ 0.66	7.98
International Funds				
American Gen	382.31	404.60	- 6.56	0.17
American Strat	177.60	189.50	- 6.22	
JG US Index	#29.327	#30.898	- 0.29	4.50
European Gen	466.63	493.80	- 0.06	
European Strat	210.66	226.19	- 4.80	
Japan Gen	108.03	114.30	+ 2.70	
Asia Pacific	67.40	72.02	- 3.75	1.09
Pacific Strat	89.07	95.19	+ 4.03	
Greater China	165.92	177.46	+ 7.41	
Latin America	60.85	65.08	+ 1.38	
Intl Growth	199.21	212.91	+ 4.34	0.11
Balanced Exempt	182.32	189.94		2.18
Global Strategy	46.02	49.22	+ 1.75	
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01203 553 231				
AXA Equity & Law Unit Trst				
Balanced Acc	84.04	89.40	- 0.09	1.66
Balanced Inc	75.50	80.32	- 0.07	1.65
Brit Excell	131.80	140.20	- 1.00	2.33
Brit Fndmtls Acc	169.70	180.50	- 0.60	3.85
Brit Fndmtls Inc	105.20	111.90	- 0.40	3.86
Europe	613.20	652.30	- 7.50	0.56
General Acc	968.10	1030.00	- 6.00	2.37
General Inc	774.80	824.30	- 5.90	2.37

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
CANADA LIFE MGMT (UK) LTD				
01707 822 180				
Can Gen Dist	316.50	335.50	+ 0.90	0.99
-do- Income Dist	173.00	183.30	- 0.80	2.89
-do- Accum	595.60	631.39	+ 3.00	2.69
Gilt & Fxd Int	49.50	52.01	+ 0.12	3.80
Growth Units	379.00	404.80	+ 1.70	1.16
Bond	299.70	320.80	- 0.30	4.40
Intl Growth	283.50	301.40	+ 1.80	0.11
North American	427.30	453.30	+10.10	...
Far East	190.80	204.10	+ 5.40	0.85
UK Smaller Cos	256.90	274.80	+ 2.30	1.23
European	147.70	157.10	- 1.90	0.13
Japanese Growth	28.92	30.64	+ 0.26	...
High Income	301.40	321.90	+ 1.30	2.73
CAPEL-CURE MYERS UT MGMT LTD				
0161 831 7433 Enq 0161 831 7433 Dlg 0161 831 7455				
American & Gen	368.90	389.80	+11.10	
European Inc	160.90	170.80	- 1.40	
Smaller Cos (4-1)	104.06	110.71	+ 0.61	2.38
Growth	758.70	807.20	+ 0.70	1.18
Income & Growth #	597.20	635.40	- 1.40	4.29
-do- Accum #	971.40	1033.50	+ 2.30	4.29
Japan & Gen	50.37	53.23	+ 1.03	..
Hallmark Gwth	1759.00	1833.00†	+13.00	0.88
-do- Accum	2240.00	2334.00	+17.00	0.88
Special Sits	174.30	185.40†	- 0.70	1.18
High Yield	1936.00	1986.00	- 5.00	3.73
CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
0171 606 0708				
Cazenove Portfolio	126.83	134.92		2.07
American Portfolio	208.56	220.85		0.23
European Portfolio	225.50	239.85	...	0.24
High Income	60.24	63.71	...	6.78
Japanese Portfolio	47.41	50.20	+1.0482	
Pacific Portfolio	110.39	118.70	+1.5342	1.78
UK Equity	126.01	134.38		1.71
UK Equity & Bd	73.65	78.02	.	5.19
UK Smlr Cos	49.41	52.85	..	2.39

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
LAURENCE KEEN UNIT TRUST MGMT				
0171 558 8000				
Bridge Income #	417.91	444.58	+ 2.06	4.47
Esk Growth	140.40	149.36	...	0.60
Inc & Growth	101.93	108.44†	+ 0.70	1.71

Yet another charity trying to get as much as it can out of people.

Realising Potential

John Grooms works in partnership with disabled people to improve their quality of life, to maximise their freedom of choice, to respect their dignity at all times and to achieve a level of independence appropriate to their needs and desires.

For information on how you can make the difference call 0800 13 88 111.

John Grooms
Working with Disabled People
Reg. Charity No. 212463

Equities come off the boil

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

[illegible]

BANKS

[illegible]

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

CONSTRUCTION

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

[illegible]

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

[illegible]

ELECTRICITY

[illegible]

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

[illegible]

ENGINEERING

[illegible]

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

[illegible]

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

[illegible]

INSURANCE

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS

[illegible]

MEDIA

[illegible]

MINING

[illegible]

OIL & GAS

[illegible]

OTHER FINANCIAL

[illegible]

PHARMACEUTICALS

[illegible]

PRINTING & PAPER

[illegible]

PROPERTY

[illegible]

RETAILERS, FOOD

[illegible]

RETAILERS, GENERAL

[illegible]

SUPPORT SERVICES

[illegible]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

[illegible]

TRANSPORT

[illegible]

WATER

[illegible]

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

[illegible]

[illegible] FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

[illegible]

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

[illegible]

LONGS (over 15 years)

[illegible]

UNDATED

[illegible]

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of: 5% 3%

[illegible]

THE TIMES EDUCATION

The Prime Minister's children are slipping back to school after the term has started, as are those of several government officials, even after pleas from David Blunkett for parents to refrain from taking holidays during term-time.

According to John McIntosh, headmaster of the London Oratory School where Euan and Nicky Blair are pupils, children should not miss out on vital lessons to fit in with their parent's plans.

Reasonable parents who show commitment to their offspring's school and who pitch up to the fêtes, the carol services and speech days must be wondering who their children belong to. Can any of us really say that the odd day out of the classroom has stunted our personalities or our careers?

What Mr Blunkett may have failed to recognise is that it is more often out of necessity rather than in defiance of school rules that parents choose to take their children away. How often do employers dictate when annual leave can be taken? Should an entire family miss out on a break if working parents have been allocated holidays during May, June or September? Cheaper fares and hotel accommodation spring up "out of season" and travelling abroad is prohibitively expensive when school is out.

Call me an irresponsible parent, but this summer I am taking my seven, nine and ten-year-old out of primary school to Malta for one week. They may miss out on seven days of desk-bound academic work but I envisage that in that time they will get the chance to embrace a variety of experiences that will enrich their general understanding of the world. And all without realising that they have been working.

ENGLISH: This will be wide-ranging in its approach. Daily diaries will be kept, postcards written, books read and discussed around the swimming pool and the dining table.



Prime target: Tony and Cherie Blair came under fire from educationists and the press when their last holiday ran over into term-time

School takes a holiday

Time spent away from the classroom can be a lesson in life, argues **Margaret Mead**

LANGUAGES: Arabic will be a cross-curriculum language. The opportunity to experience this is not easily found. Interest in French, German and Italian is all stimulated by meeting and talking to children from other countries. And pen friends are created in this way.

MATHEMATICS: Each child will have some cash and will need to understand the difference in currencies. Exchange rates will help with multiplication tables: it is not difficult to boost children's interest in maths when they are surrounded by enticing objects in a shop.

SCIENCE: Observation of flora and fauna in their natural habitat is always interesting. Sound and light will be well demonstrated in Malta, courtesy of fireworks' displays. We will also conduct a scientific investigation of mosquitoes, devising ways to prevent bites. For recreation, perhaps during breakfast, we will watch the Discovery television channel, which provides excellent footage of the natural world. We will be swimming and snorkelling off the coast to enable study of the Mediterranean habitat (also part of our physical education programme).

DESIGN TECHNOLOGY: This will involve looking at aircraft design. The building of sandcastles will also be used to study design and to assess the need for moist sand as a building requirement. The "design-a-sandwich" concept comes alive when the children help to make their meals or choose food from a salad bar.

HISTORY: Malta's origins are fascinating and the island is rich in historical sites. We can study this history, from the Stone Age tracks and the Knights Templars to Malta's role in the Second World War, and link it to European history as a whole. A morning in the dungeons of Mdina will have many implications, not merely from a historical perspective.

GEOGRAPHY: From the moment the aircraft takes off, we will be studying geography — mountains, volcanoes, rivers, seas and land. Clouds will be observed during the flight. There will also be many opportunities to study erosion and how the sea affects the land. Land usage will be studied, as will weather systems and the docks in the capital, Valletta.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES: Malta is Roman Catholic. St Paul was shipwrecked here, which will provide the impetus to examine the New Testament, and to visit some of the fine churches.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: Swimming can provide a novel approach to play and it increases a child's confidence in, and enjoyment of, the water. It will be a good opportunity to hit a tennis ball on real courts and play football, which transcends all cultural barriers and can be enjoyed anywhere.

ART: The children will have sketchbooks for drawing and will take photographs. They will be able to see works of art within an historical context. Wet sand will be used to sculpt figures.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION: The value, emotionally, of spending quality time with parents who are often busy at home cannot be overemphasised. Experiencing life away from home and school, and the chance to observe the conduct expected of them in society, can help children to mature socially. Children learn through talking, which cannot always be encouraged in a class of 38 pupils. In a family environment, on holiday, they have many things to observe and discuss.

The issue for head teachers is whether the system of record-keeping that counts these holidays as truancy is worth upholding.

When a chief inspector calls

John O'Leary

School inspections are popular and invaluable or reviled and ineffective, depending on which surveys you read. Two diametrically opposite views emerged on successive mornings earlier this week and yesterday we were treated to the "independent" evaluation. Head teachers, governors and parents have all had their say. Even the children have been polled.

The National Union of Teachers was first out of the blocks. A survey of more than 1,200 head teachers or deputies — all NUT members — overwhelmingly condemned the Ofsted system as wasteful and demotivating. One head said it was "possibly the most intimidating experience of my life", another that any benefits were wiped out by the consequent illness among his staff.

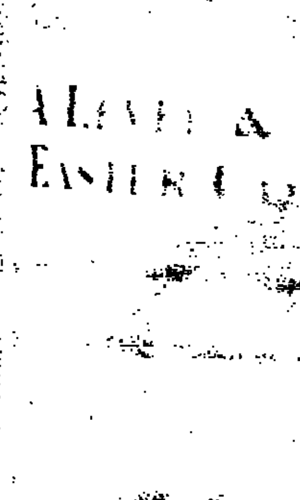
Chris Woodhead, the senior chief inspector, dismissed the survey as "seriously flawed" — it was, after all, a self-selecting sample (albeit a large one) of NUT members. He presented Ofsted's own findings, produced from a MORI telephone poll of primary school heads and governors. This survey, of almost identical size to the NUT's, found that four out of five schools were satisfied with the way their inspection had been conducted and almost as many thought the recommendations for action provided a basis for future development.

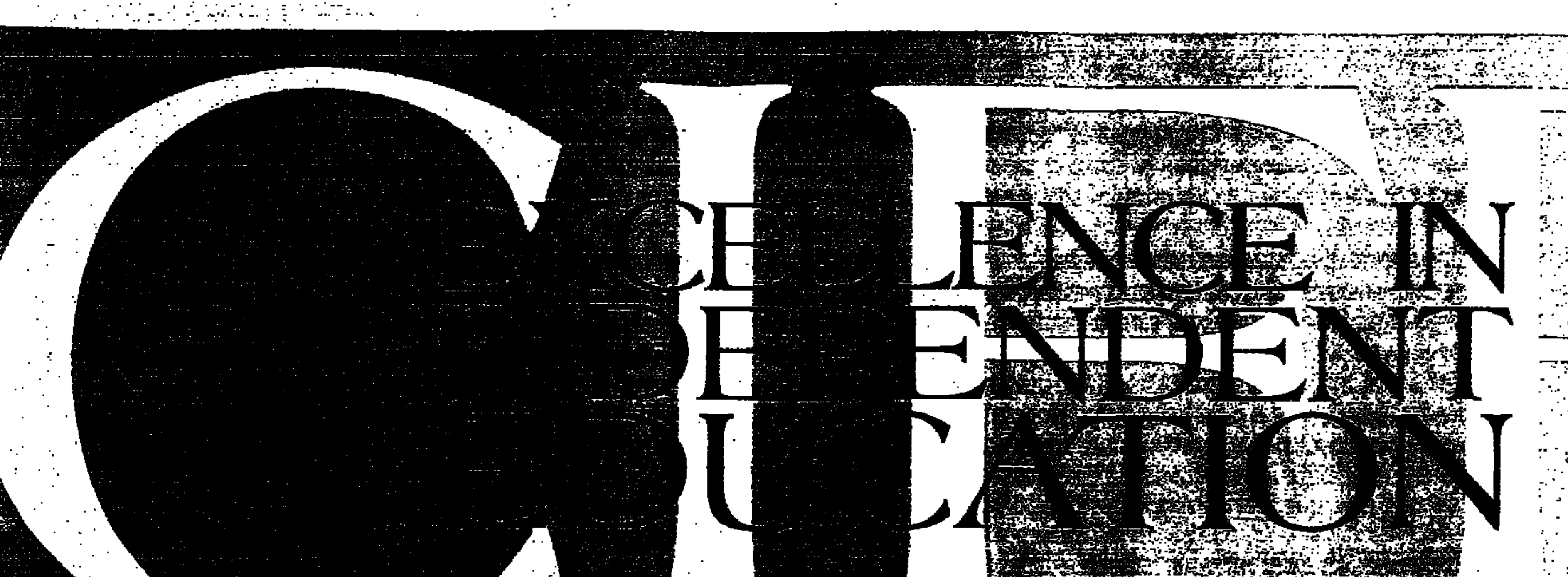
This time it was the turn of Doug McAvoy, the NUT's general secretary, to criticise the methodology, claiming that the wrong questions had been asked. Nigel de Gruchy, his opposite number at the National Association of School Masters and Union of Women Teachers, noted that the satisfaction level coincided with the proportion of schools judged not to have serious weaknesses. Mr Woodhead said that the MORI poll confirmed his impressions, gained on numerous school visits. The demonisation of Ofsted was down to the unions and a tiny minority with access to the columns of the educational press.

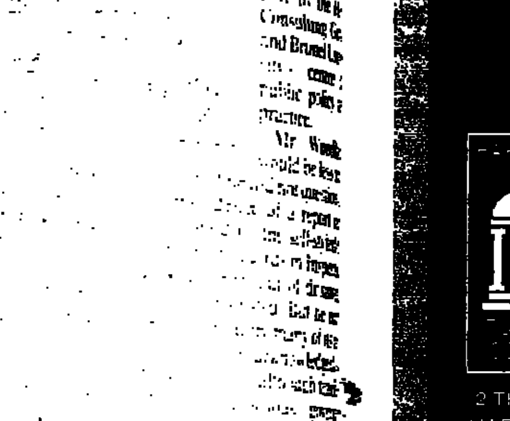
Having experienced two inspections as a governor, I have been struck by their approach, one apparently determined to find fault, the other to celebrate success. The contrast may make a crucial difference to the performance of nervous teachers. The point is highlighted in yesterday's report by the Helix Consulting Group and Brunel University's centre for public policy and practice.

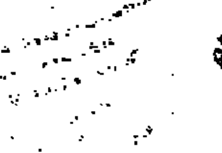
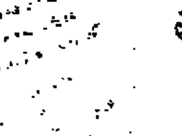
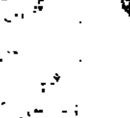
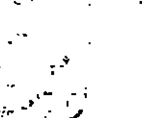
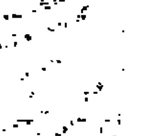
Mr Woodhead would be less than human if he did not question the independence of a report commissioned by the self-styled Office for Standards in Inspection, a body born out of dissatisfaction with Ofsted. But he might be surprised by many of its conclusions. It is acknowledged, for example, that although teachers remain suspicious, governors and parents generally accept the validity of findings.

Indeed, even the NUT poll shows a minority questioning the fairness of reports, most of which are perceived to tell schools what they already know. But there lies the longer-term debate over Ofsted's future: if most reports were accurate first time round and standards are improving, is it worth repeating the process again and again?




CIFE
EXCELLENCE IN INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
University Entrance




Teachers who train must try harder

Trainees are being cheated by tutors, argues **Elizabeth Kelly**

The new year has opened as the last one ended, with claims that the shortage of teachers is becoming more critical. One of the reasons for this is that some teachers prefer life away from the school classroom. Why is this?

I qualified as a secondary school English teacher in 1996. I took the course at a top university department of education which has now received a clean bill of health from Ofsted. About half my training took place in schools, where I was under the supervision of expert practising teachers. The rest of my time was spent at university, under the dubious guidance of the English faculty.

I came across dedicated staff, but the faculty mostly consisted of disillusioned former teachers. Responsible for turning out a new generation of English teachers, they were role models with a duty to encourage and inspire. Sadly, it appeared that they had opted for teacher training not so much from a passion for their profession but as a desire to escape from it.

Despite regular school visits and bouts of teaching, the faculty staff seemed out of touch with the problems facing trainees. I began my Postgraduate Certificate in Education at a time when fundamental elements of education were in a state of upheaval. Yet instead of confronting these issues, the staff either evaded or ridiculed them. Sneering at the national curriculum, and at the Conservative Government, which had introduced it, was one of the faculty's favourite pastimes.

Discipline — one of a trainee's most pressing concerns — was considered a dirty word. However, a teacher cannot teach unless a class is orderly. When we asked for advice on how to deal with unruly students, we were fobbed off with the advice "avoid confrontation". We were expected to accommodate indiscipline, rather than to impose discipline.

In refusing to acknowledge the real pressures placed on trainees, the staff failed to meet our needs. Similarly, I believe that the course failed to attend to the needs of the children we were being trained to teach.

While the course syllabus appeared to address the needs of the national curriculum, our training was subject to the whims and personal opinions of the staff. The faculty promoted a liberal, non-competitive system of education that prized creativity far above essential writing skills. The fact that such a view is at odds with the English curriculum and the demands of the real world did not bother them. The obligation to prepare students for the workplace was resented.

The English curriculum highlights the importance of grammar and punctuation in enabling students to communicate effectively. But the faculty dismissed the teaching of these elements as tedious and unnecessary. Overt instruction was actually considered harmful. Many of my fellow students were easily influenced on this matter. One, posted to a particularly tough comprehensive, remarked that she really could see no point in teaching punctuation. If her students learnt to express themselves, that was enough.

I found this attitude alarming. What right did we have to deprive any student of basic writing skills? And how were we helping students to express themselves if we denied them access to the intrinsic tools of self-expression? As well as being defeatist, such low aspirations were, I thought, harmful to their job prospects.

Not only did the faculty promote a veto on the teaching of grammar and punctuation, it tried to shift the responsibility to other departments. History and even science teachers, argued one tutor, all had a duty to help to improve student literacy. This would release overburdened English teachers to address neglected topics, such as media.

The fact that media study, as yet, plays a minor role in the English curriculum, did not deter our tutors from plugging it continually. Days were set aside for its consideration. In contrast, grammar and punctuation scarcely commanded a single seminar.

Media, it was argued, were not only more accessible than much of the "classic" literature set for study, but also more relevant. According to one tutor, television's *EastEnders* was of greater relevance to the lives of most students than Shakespeare. Why then should he take precedence?

Central to the faculty's philosophy was the concept of "social justice in education". Issues of social justice were, however, often promoted at the expense of education, defeating the purpose of our training. Media seminars were manipulated as a vehicle for airing political views.

The faculty was hostile to convention and tradition. Established and often highly effective teaching methods were rejected in favour of a progressive approach called differentiation. This required the teacher to replace whole-class teaching with group tasks, adapted to the abilities of the students.

Although attractive in theory, differentiation was inefficient and frustrating in practice. It virtually disempowered the teacher, who could do little more than assist while students muddled through their assignments. I enrolled on my course because I wanted to teach, not merely facilitate. I set out hoping to be enlightened; I left disenchanted.

Teacher-trainers occupy a privileged position. They are unburdened by the daily pressures of the classroom, and so they have the power to influence the course of education. The quality of their instruction is crucial in encouraging teachers to stay in the profession. Trainers have every right to question government policy, but they also have a duty to provide constructive, impartial guidance and a worthwhile course that prepares trainees for the real demands of teaching.

UPI/CORBIS



Rules made to be broken: some teacher-trainers consider discipline a dirty word yet teachers must learn to impose it

Finding jobs for the independent boys and girls

Public schools need advice on careers too, says **Bruce Kemble**

For the past decade, Graham Searle has helped thousands of independent pupils with their most crucial decision when they leave the schoolroom — choosing a career.

Mr Searle has been the national director of the Independent School Careers Organisation (Isco), based at Camberley in Surrey, which was set up by the Headmaster's Conference at the start of the Second World War. Heads felt that boys needed help getting jobs. "It was just boys in those days," he says. "But now we advise as many, if not more, girls."

It may seem incongruous to give careers advice to pupils from the ancient public schools who clearly have a headstart when it comes to networking. "I doubt whether this was ever true," he says. "But it is even less true today than it was then. However, to suggest that anyone is bound to get a job simply because they have been to an independent school is no longer the case. Firms are looking for people who can do the job, not where they came from."

Mr Searle, 60, who retired in September, organised 13,000 aptitude tests a year for 15 to 16-year-olds and interviews with about 7,000. Isco staff go over the results to help pupils in their A-level choices or they help sixth-formers to choose a university. Although 95 per cent of Isco candidates go on to higher education, the remainder receive careers advice when they go straight from school to work.

Mr Searle says: "There have always been a few firms, such as Marks & Spencer, that take people with only A levels, but the run-of-the-mill leavers from an independent school still want to go to university."

Isco lays on about 150 courses a year that show teenagers what a job involves, ranging from hotel management at the Savoy to nursery nursing at Norland and horse-racing management at Goodwood. The closing date for applications for most of the Easter courses is Friday, January 22.

Mr Searle has noticed that an increasing number of firms refuse to recruit anyone who does not have a degree. "If you are going to read a straight academic subject, the best place for you is a traditional university with high academic standards; remembering that Warwick and York are as difficult to get into as Oxford or Cambridge.

"If you are looking for something vocational, there are many places that will be exactly what your employer is looking for. For example, Marks & Spencer will look at someone with a vocational degree in retail selling from Bournemouth or Manchester Metropolitan."

On the key question of how to choose your university, he is very clear. "You can do a lot of the preliminaries without visiting anywhere at all. One of the key factors is what grades you are likely to get.

"You can apply to six universities, but it would be optimistic to think that you would visit them all. I do not think you should accept an offer from a university you have not visited. That would be very silly."

Please sir, stub your cigarette out



Smog alert: staffrooms are often thick with tobacco fumes

Why have school staffrooms escaped the ban on smoking in public workplaces, asks Richard Evans

I cannot say that I have a particularly well-developed sense of smell, but whenever I venture into a school I have not visited before, it is smell that leads me to the staffroom. For, with very few exceptions, staffrooms are surrounded by dense fumes.

It may come as a surprise to many people, but schools are among the few public workplaces that still allow smoking. Most local councils have a no-smoking policy for all premises other than schools.

So why have schools escaped the smoking ban that almost every other institution has introduced? The answer may be related to the amount of stress under which teachers find themselves. Teaching is near the top of the list of professions whose members have the shortest life expectancy after retirement.

I know that being a teacher is very stressful. But smoking is a potential killer — not only for the smoker but for those who inhale the smoke. Puffing in the staffroom also tends to encourage non-smokers to take up the habit, sometimes almost in self-defence. Many teachers who enter the profession as "part-time" smokers soon become fully fledged members of the smoking fraternity.

Nevertheless, many teachers are unhappy about the amount of smoking that takes place in the staffroom because, of course, smoke affects everyone. If I had been given £1 by each teacher who told me that he or she objected to staffrooms being taken over by smokers, I would be a rich teacher (and there are not many of those around).

When I mentioned to colleagues that I was planning to write an article against smoking, they welcomed the idea. Non-smokers were pleased because they have long objected to, but could do nothing about, the smoke-filled staffroom. Several smokers pointed out that they were trying to give up but that, as teachers, it was almost impossible not to smoke with others lighting up around them. They felt that this pressure might just make a difference.

It must also be remembered that teachers are not the only people involved. Children are normally banned from the staffroom but they are aware of the smell of smoke escaping into the corridors. In this way, they are introduced to a duplicitous philosophy of "do as I say, not as I do". It is illegal to place cigarette advertisements near schools because of the influence that they can exert on young minds — surely a teacher who smokes is an even greater influence. Teachers are role models and can either encourage their students to smoke or, indeed, prevent them from taking up this deadly habit.

The decision on whether or not smoking can take place on school premises must be taken out of the control of the school or local education authority. It should be banned by the Government.

This is the way forward for healthier future generations of students and teachers. It may also have the more mundane advantage of preventing legal action from staff or students suffering from smoking-related diseases, as has happened in the United States.

I met the entertainer Roy Castle shortly before he died of cancer. It is well known that he had never touched a cigarette but had regularly performed in the smoky atmosphere of clubs. At the time nobody complained, either because they were not aware of the dangers or because it would have seemed rather pathetic. However, today the mood has changed and we now know the risks that smoking entails.



Don't do as I say, do as I do: children may copy their teachers

Learning need not be confined to the city

A community university benefits rural students, says Iola Smith

Many adults who missed the opportunity to try higher education in their teens prefer to ease themselves into degree-level study with a part-time course. There is no shortage of opportunities for people in large conurbations, where most of the new universities are located. But in rural areas suitable courses inevitably are thinner on the ground.

A new scheme in North Wales, which could be a model for other parts of Britain, gives mature students from rural areas that opportunity. Bangor University has established the Community University of North Wales, offering introductory courses at further education (FE) colleges throughout the region.

Professor Roy Evans, Bangor's Vice-Chancellor, says: "There are many people in the region who, for various reasons — geographic, linguistic, domestic or financial — have never had the opportunity to improve their skills and qualifications. The community university will enable them to do so in their own locality."

Other universities offer franchised courses, but this initiative is different because it involves an agreement between all the region's FE colleges and its two higher education institutions, Bangor University and the North East Wales Institute (Newi).

Potential undergraduates will build up credits at their local college, which will count towards a degree. They will then be able to transfer to Bangor or the institute. There is no guaranteed university place, but if they are committed and hardworking they can build up the requisite number of credits.

Already 70 courses taught in eight FE colleges have been designated as community university pathway courses. They include, for example, a Higher National Diploma course at Llysfasi Agricultural College in Ruthin. Students can transfer to an agriculture degree course at Bangor. Similarly, part-time students studying for the college's forestry certificate can benefit by switching on completion to Bangor's forest science degree course.

Physical transfer between institutions is not essential, however. The community university is seeking ways of teaching entire degree courses in colleges: Newi has begun by offering its BA design course as a part-time option at Menai FE College in Bangor.

"By taking the FE route we are able to use credits and modules to break down barriers," says David Roberts, chairman of the community university initiative and Bangor's academic registrar. "Students can progress from NVQ level through BTec to a degree.

"But that is only the first stage. We envisage that by applying the Internet and distance learning, students will be able to study at home or in the workplace. We are investing £100,000 this year on exploring these options. And we have earmarked four curriculum areas — business management, media studies, community studies and engineering — as pilots for developing and testing new teaching methods."

The initiative has been so successful that the community university is developing part-time degree courses. Fifty students have enrolled for a BA in social studies being taught in Gwynedd and Flintshire. A second part-time course on culture and the arts will be launched this month.

These courses are taught in the evening and at weekends. Students can take between four and ten years to complete their degrees.



POP ALBUMS

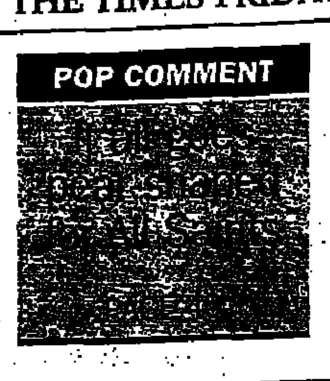
Return of skiffle's Lonnie Donegan

PAGE 39

THE TIMES

ARTS

POP COMMENT





All glory to the angels in the wings

A week into the new year, ten days into a flu lurgy *sans pareil*, and still I find myself uncharacteristically buoyant. Why so? Have my balls come up in the lottery? Is *The Times* tea-lady covertly slipping me tubes of Viagra from her estimable trolley? Are my children finally emerging from their zoological phase?

No, the cause is literally more prosaic. I have just raced through a splendid book; a tome which restores my faith in the inspirational power of the arts after what seems like several decades of reporting little but greed, stupidity and vanity in all corners of Luvviedom.

It is published this month by the Theatres Trust, written by Judith Strong, and called *Encore: Strategies for Theatre Renewal*. Yes, I know that must rank with *Ten Great Carpet Showrooms in the Hendon Area* in the all-time list of unappetising book titles. Don't be put off. This is a riveting read.

Quite simply it recounts the history of 14 fine Victorian, Edwardian and Art Deco theatres that were once mired in disrepair, disuse or disrepute but have now been lovingly restored to theatrical use. "What's so special about that?" you ask. "Isn't the lottery paying to redevelop hundreds of culture palaces, at billions of pounds' cost to the poor saps clogging up the nation's newsagents every Saturday?"

Indeed it is. But the restorations chronicled in *Encore* owe nothing to lottery money and everything to the enthusiasm, energy and generosity of local enthusiasts. As Sir John Drummond, the Theatres Trust chairman, says in his foreword: "It is significant that nearly all of the stories told here predate the lottery, and that where the influence of the lottery has been felt, it has not always been beneficial."

More of that later. First, let's talk miracles. Some of these theatres were saved by the unwavering vision of determined individuals battling against daunting financial obstacles, indifferent bureaucrats and ghastly property developers. One reads with astonishment of the two amateur-operatic stalwarts so intent on saving the Sheffield Lyceum that they remortgaged their own homes to pay the £100,000 selling price. Or of the Manchester philanthropist who bought an entire two-acre office block for £2.25 million in order that his beloved Palace Theatre could extend its backstage area by a crucial 20ft.

Other theatres were saved by communal efforts. In 1972 10,000 people protested to stop the Blackpool Grand being turned into a Littlewoods store. As *Encore* notes: "It is ironic that, 25 years on, the theatre is thriving while the store which was to replace it is closing its outlets throughout the country."

Another historic Lancashire theatre, the 216-year-old Lancaster Grand, was saved from demolition by an amateur dramatic group, *Lancaster Footlights*. Its members clubbed together to buy it, restored it, fought a court case to preserve it when the council (intent on lucrative redevelopment) served a compulsory purchase order, and have run it ever since for the benefit of local audiences and performers.

WEEK IN THE ARTS

RICHARD MORRISON

Lady Luck has played her part in restoring some theatres' fortunes. Southampton's dowdy Gaumont Cinema was transformed into the sparkling Mayflower Theatre partly because a 1983 public inquiry deemed that cinema attendance was "nationally in steep decline". Thank heavens for the myopia of officialdom. And the Sheffield Lyceum received its £12 million facelift largely because the city council became besotted with hosting the 1991 World Student Games and wanted a swanky arts venue to show off to the world's *jeunesse sportive*. Alas, the Games nearly bankrupted the city: but hooray, the lusciously redecorated Lyceum has proved its value ever since.

Not every story in *Encore* is rosy. Newcastle has a glorious Grade I listed theatre — the Tyne, with its unique Victorian stage machinery that could (and did) sink the Spanish Armada on stage for the amazement of 19th-century Geordies. Local enthusiasts managed to save it from a fate worse than death as a blue-movie fleapit. But its future role in a city that has vast, lottery-fuelled cultural ambitions is uncertain, to say the least.

Which brings us to the L-word. At first the lottery was welcomed by organisations such as the Theatres Trust, which expected it to bring an overdue sack of lolly to those trying to restore Britain's magnificent but flaky theatrical heritage. Disillusionment followed all too swiftly. In its annual report last month the trust declared that the lottery has led to "white elephants that should never have been started, vastly over-elaborate refurbishments, schemes that cannot be completed unless more money is produced, and buildings that cost more to run than anticipated".

That's not all. The knock-on effect of the lottery projects will probably hit non-lottery ventures — such as those theatres restored by local efforts. As Judith Strong notes in *Encore*, the new lottery-funded Lowry Centre in Salford might seem like a wonderful boost to the North West, but it will be in direct competition with Manchester's Palace Theatre and Opera House. Is there enough audience and quality touring shows to keep all three in business? Nobody really knows. Nobody did the hard-nosed calculations before handing out the millions.

The message of *Encore* is that theatres can flourish in the most unpromising circumstances, provided that the community wants a theatre badly enough. The worry about many grandiose lottery projects is that the money has often been awarded without any demonstration of grass-roots support, let alone panting enthusiasm. There may be some horrible crashes ahead in 1999 and 2000.

But I shan't spoil my good mood by thinking about them now. Today it is sufficient to celebrate the doughty thespian battlers chronicled in *Encore*. In 1885 Jerome K. Jerome wrote that "the glorious uncertainty of the boards almost rivals that of the turf". Not much has changed in 114 years. But that only makes a triumph against outrageously-long odds all the sweeter — whether on turf or boards.

Nothing dumb about this show

THEATRE



Gregory Doran's revival of *The Winter's Tale* begins, as Shakespeare's play doesn't, with some arresting dumb show. In comes Antony Sher's Leontes in diamond crown and ermine accessories, stalking down a towering neoclassical corridor peopled by courtiers in monocles and spats, frock coats, Ruritanian uniforms and black Edwardian dresses. You hear the whispering that is presumably rattling around his paranoid brainbox; you observe his big, grim smile; you begin to suspect that this will be one of the RSC's stronger-than-usual stabs at late, late Shakespeare.

So it is, too; and not just because of the power of Sher's maniac jealousy or his skill at showing a man slipping ever deeper into despotism. His Leontes sounds almost incredulous when he first admits his suspicions to himself, and, when he tells Geoffrey Freshwater's bluff Camillo that his wife Hermione is having an affair with his friend Polixenes, it is with a tiny, embarrassed laugh. But disgust and blinkered rage have soon overwhelmed the residual tenderness he signals, and the Sher who eventually limps onto a dais to judge the queen is a roaring, snarling monster with so little command over himself that he cannot enunciate his accusations properly.

It is a forceful, intelligent piece of acting, and, when Sher is penitently bunched on the ground at the end, a touching one; but it is not the only memorable performance on offer. Estelle Kohler is a fine, ringing Paulina and Ken Bones's Polixenes formidably fierce. And Alexandra Gilbreath displays a versatility and depth I had not suspected. Maybe it was the after-effects of flu that activated the lump in my throat: but I was more moved by her Hermione than by any I have seen.

That is partly because at first she is, if not exactly stilted, at least pretty cool and laid-back. When her Hermione offhandedly nudges Polixenes as they sit on a settee, or relaxedly dances with him, you can see the hint of a reason for Leontes's imaginings. But when she appears for her trial she is so altered that the court gasps. It isn't just that she has clearly spent weeks on bread and water in some cramped dungeon. This frail, sweaty figure speaks with simple humility and utterly unaffected dignity. She has been bitterly wronged — and she is more queen than she ever was.

Doran's production has several original touches. Leontes's son Mamillius is a sickly boy in a wheelchair, which is an over-obvious way of preparing us for his death but does bring centre-stage the most helpless victim of his father's lunacy. The sheepshearing, as befits a celebration financed by a nouveau-riche shepherd, occurs in a sort of fleece-baling factory, complete with pulleys and iron wheels. The billowing cloth that begins as the court's ceiling becomes mountainous terrain, the mouth of the bear that eats poor Antigonus, even an enormous bed for Autolycus to wallow in. As the pickpocket Autolycus himself, Ian Hughes entertainingly changes from C of E vicar to Jewish peddler to Lytton Strachey lookalike.

True, the episcopal figure who arrives in Greek Orthodox hat and scarlet robes with Apollo's answer to Leontes's appeal to Delphi is a bit absurd. But Doran could argue that *The Winter's Tale* occurs in a pagan world yet preaches the Christian virtues of forgiveness and reconciliation. In this absorbing production even the muddles seem justifiable.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

DONALD COOPER



Alexandra Gilbreath is a moving Hermione and Antony Sher a powerful Leontes in Gregory Doran's absorbing RSC staging of *The Winter's Tale*

Weird but wonderful

The Life of Edward the Second of England
Riverside Studios

In a programme note to this production Andrew Visnevski suggests that Brecht is nowadays valued more for his theoretical writings than for his plays. It is an intriguing argument but one that belongs with the old chestnut about whether so-and-so has stopped beating his wife.

A better course than weighing arguments this way and that is to see a Brecht play. This is not a suggestion that often comes from me, but Visnevski's achievement with this early work, dating from 1924 and rarely seen, provides a thrilling discovery of his author's weird skills. Contrary elements are rammed into each other and there's never a moment when we aren't aware we are watching actors telling us something, even though (human nature being what it is) we do keep slipping into the simpler half-belief that they have identified with their roles.

Hitler launched his Munich putsch while Brecht was rehearsing the play, and the sense of a society in deep trouble pervades the scenes where a cluster of outraged landowners with such names as Lancaster and Warwick look around for a strong man to restore order in the state. Since events follow the same route as in Marlowe's play, their complaint is that the king dotes on Gaveston, but Brecht is not interested in exact parallels. He merely tosses in suggestions. We are to watch how liberators develop into tyrants and be on our guard.

Visnevski's Cherub Company (founded 21 years ago) has set itself the tricky task of re-imagining a Brecht-like production, helped (or maybe hindered?) by the many surviving descriptions of its Munich premiere. The cast of nine are in whiteface scored with black wrinkles, wear costumes that are part Twenties, part medieval, and the central feature of Jason Southgate's design is a four-poster bed hung with white curtains that serves in turn as a place for sexy coupling, homo and hetero, chambers in various palaces and abbeys, and finally the cesspit where Mariano Caligaris's naked Edward meets his end.



Mariano Caligaris and Christopher Gunning

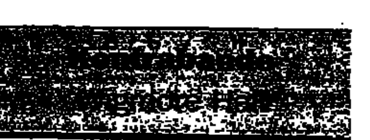
Caligaris's accent is sometimes awkward though Brecht might have blessed this feature, since he included a Latvian non-actress with no German in his cast. But in the final scenes of humiliation Caligaris displays a powerful serenity that engineers the King's shift from fool to quasi-hero.

A shrewd casting decision gives the roles of Gaveston and Lightborn, lover and killer, to the same actor, Christopher Gunning: the dead common butcher's boy with hungry features becoming a thinly smiling sadist in a butcher's white coat. Rebecca Over gives a fine account of the Queen's descent into sluttery, but the most striking acting comes from William Wollen's Mortimer, turning from the scholarly mien and disdainful diction of a Victorian bishop into a bald and lumbering Moses Maggot, fascinating to behold. The same can be said of the production as a whole, though Brecht would have made the soldiers peel spuds with more conviction.

JEREMY KINGSTON

LONDON CONCERTS: Young music stars shine at the keyboard and in a Baroque ensemble

Modern youth



The Park Lane Group series is unique in that its programmes emerge from the chosen group of talented young players. Nothing is imposed, except that all the repertoire must be contemporary. So what do musicians in their twenties play these days? In a week of concerts there are 63 works by an astonishing 50 composers, including Ligeti, Sciarrino, Ferneyhough, Birtwistle, Minna Keal, Bryars, Berio and Tippett.

A highlight of Wednesday's programmes was a pair of Messiaen piano performances. The great French composer reinvented the piano for his own celestial uses. But his works, however dazzling and enigmatic, hold a mirror up to the player's nature. New Zealander Stephen De Pledge, who began with *Petites esquisses d'oiseaux*, is a disarmingly relaxed and sunny performer; the difficult double articulations shivered under his hands and his switches of weight were like quicksilver. Messiaen may have caught the aggressive strangeness of the birds, but the overriding impression left by De Pledge was of playful mystery. Israeli pianist Alon Goldstein brought more solemnity to *Le Loriot* from *Catalogue d'Oiseaux*, and at first seemed self-conscious but proved sonorously romantic. Goldstein's pedalling softened the shrill incandescence that De Pledge wrung from the piano's upper registers. But his palette and rhythmic energy were impressive, especially in Graham Hair's *Wild Cherries & Honeycomb*, a brain-teaser of separate spinning lines.

De Pledge's programme emphasised the light and lucid, from Fitkin's hilarious *Furniture*, which swings along jazzily, to Mustonen's innocently frenetic *Ballade*. He gave due weight to Jonathan Harvey's tribute *Tombeau de Messiaen*, although it was hard not to find the taped sounds superfluous. An effective addition to the piano came in Adès's enchanting *Still Sorrowing*, where adhesive transforms the piano's middle register into a blunt, staccato intruder.

Perhaps it is a sign of the times that there is not only a solo saxophonist in this year's series, but a quartet too. Ruth Darby, accompanied by Maria King, playing tenor and soprano saxes, gave an uneven programme. After Geert van Keulen's long and ungrateful *Fingers*, written apparently against both instruments, Turnage's charming *Sarabande*, with its after-midnight clock "chimes", offered respite in a nicely slithering tune. Her performance of Ian Wilson's solo *I Sleep at Waking* was eloquent and she injected a muscular vibe into Gary Carpenter's Sonata, although loud sax and piano in unison was not always a complementary combination.

HELEN WALLACE

Bach with bite

Despite its Germanic-sounding name, the Baroque ensemble Kontrabande is British and for the first 18 months of its existence has based itself primarily in London. Its director is the counter-tenor Charles Humphries, one of the brightest of our rising young stars. It is a measure of Humphries's exceptional talent that although only a few years out of college, studying with Charles Brett, James Bowman and Michael Chance, he has been able to surround himself with a fine group of relatively established performers.

Their concert at the Wigmore Hall on Wednesday night gave an equally starring role to the ensemble's oboist, Alexandra Bellamy, in a concerto by Bach, in addition to a pair of cantatas by the same composer featuring oboe as well as voice. The cantata *Ich habe genug*, BWV 82, may celebrate the purification of the Virgin Mary, but its longing for the quiescence of death is unmistakable. That sense of mortality, expressed in the languorous oboe obbligato that threads its way in and out of the vocal line, was superbly captured by the group.

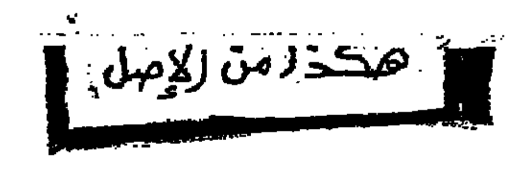
Humphries is gifted with not only a naturally beautiful voice, even throughout the compass, but also the ability and resources to put it to expressive use. His command of Bachian "affects" or emotions is impressive, as evidenced by the subtly contrasting passions of the three arias of *Ich habe genug*; the muted recapitulation of the second of them, *Schlummert ein*, was simply spellbinding.

Cantata BWV 170, *Vergnugte Ruh'*, elicited equally stylish and compelling singing from him, and some nifty fingerwork from Laurence Cummings on chamber organ. A different aspect of Humphries's musicianship was on display in Vivaldi's cantata *Cessate omai cessate*, where the progression of the abandoned lover from self-pity to vengeful fury was colourfully traced. The hushed opening to the recitative describing the horrid, silent caves, whither the protagonist retires to wreak his vengeance, was a theatrical coup.

With one instrument to a part, the sound produced by the strings is on the thin side, but that is more than compensated for by the alert articulation and shaping of phrases. Both in the cantatas and in the Concerto for oboe d'amore, BWV 1055, the ensemble, led by Clare Salaman, provided a lively, nuanced texture, which in the concerto was an ideal backdrop for Bellamy's solo work.

There was incisive and ebullient playing too from Richard Campbell and Marie Cunningham in Telemann's Concerto for viola da gamba and recorder.

BARRY MILLINGTON





After eleven attempts, we have lift-off

NEW POP ALBUMS

ANI DIFRANCO
Up Up Up Up Up Up
(Righteous Babe/Cooking Vinyl COOK 173 £12.99)

LESS than a year after the groundbreaking *Little Plastic Castle*, Ani DiFranco is back with a new album, her twelfth no less. But although the 28-year-old singer, songwriter and guitarist from Buffalo, New York, is prolific, she does not put out this stuff for the sake of it; quite the reverse.

The curiously titled *Up Up Up Up Up Up* finds her stretching out yet again in new and unexpected directions. Musically, she has allowed her songs to develop within the framework of a band identity as never before, and numbers such as *Know Now Then*, with its oddly skewed rhythm-section vamp, and *Come Away From It*, with its claustrophobic jazz-noir arrangement, underline how far beyond her folk origins she is now prepared to explore. Her razor-sharp funk guitar riffing in tandem with Julie Wolf's organ part at the start of *Jukebox* is breathtaking.

There is evidence too of a new maturity in DiFranco's writing. *Angry Anymore* offers a fascinating insight into her own emotional development couched in a message of reassurance to her father: "Now I've seen both of my parents play out the hands that they were dealt/As each year goes by I know more about how my father must have felt".

Coming on at times like an American P.J. Harvey, DiFranco combines an abrasive, witchy sense of otherness with an all-important element of humanity. Meanwhile, her musicianship grows apace. It seems the only way for her to go is indeed up.

LONNIE DONEGAN
Muleskinner Blues
(Capo/RCA CAPO 501 £12.99)

ALTHOUGH a lingering presence in the British charts of the 1950s and early 1960s, Lonnie Donegan is now little more than a name echoing down the years from the pre-history of rock'n'roll. His twangy voice conjures recollections of the days when pop music was beamed in on an indistinct signal from Radio Luxembourg and picked up, as if by clandestine arrangement, on valve-driven wirelesses and crystal radio sets in bedrooms around the country.

The primary access to mainstream (BBC) radio for artists of Donegan's ilk was on children's shows such as *Saturday Club*, which may explain why cheesy, neo-vaudeville anthems such as *Does Your Chewing Gum Lose its Flavour* and *My Old Man's a Dustman* remain among his best-remembered hits.

But as the biggest star of the skiffle craze and an early importer of American blues, gospel and folk styles, notably with his first hit, *Rock Island Line*, the Glasgow-born singer and strummer was nevertheless a key influence on the generation of musicians who invented British rock'n'roll. An early disciple was Van Morrison, who makes two guest appearances on *Muleskinner Blues*, Donegan's first studio album in more than 20 years, along with the veteran jazzman Chris Barber, country-rock guitarist Albert Lee and others.

Now 67, Donegan still commands respect, and lean new recordings of cobwebbed favourites including *Rock Island Line*, *Stewball* and *I'm Alabammy Bound* (reworked as a duet with Morrison) recall the magic of his prime. But despite the gritty edge to his performance of Paul Kennerley's *The Welfare Line* ("Night's rolling in, it's cold as sin/Here on the welfare line"), the album suffers from a surfeit of codgerish laments to the good old days such as *Skiffle* ("When I was a little boy my mother said to me . . .") and the quaint campfire hokum of *Fancy Talking Tinker* and *Poker Club*.

At its best, as on the title track, *Muleskinner Blues* offers a relaxed round of heritage rock'n'roll in much the same vein as that purveyed by the Notting Hillbillies. But skiffle was only ever a bridge to somewhere else and, despite the album's nostalgic cachet, Donegan's music has a somewhat limited appeal once shorn of its original innocence and vigour.

DAVE ALVIN
Blackjack David
(Hightone HCD 8091 £14.99)

BOB DYLAN and Dave Alvin seem to have formed a mutual admiration society. The title track of *Blackjack David* is a traditional song which Dylan recorded on his 1992 album *Good as I Been to You*, while the 43-year-old roots-rock veteran from Los Angeles has been the guest performer at a dozen or so of Dylan's recent shows.

But Alvin remains very much his own man on his sixth solo outing since the break-up of his group the Blasters. With a deep, slightly cracked voice, as hard and worn as old walnut panelling, he invests the melancholy narratives of *California Snow*, *From a Kitchen Table* and *1968* with a poignant charm that never becomes sentimental or mawkish.

"In a Texas bar there's a man sitting alone . . . He's drinking beers and he's feeling old" he sings in *Abilene*, another song about ordinary folk nursing their sadnesses with as much dignity as circumstances allow. Acoustic guitars, pedal steel, mandolin, banjo, organ and harmonium swirl around the mix like water dancing over rocks, all steered with unerring melodic grace by Alvin's lugubrious drawl. The message, more often than not, is that life is a trying and frequently mournful business. So how come this music makes you feel so damn good?



Ani DiFranco's new album is called *Up Up Up Up Up Up*. How very appropriate

JAY-Z
Vol 2 . . . Hard Knock Life
(Northwestside/BMG 74321 62555 £11.99)

ALREADY a massive hit in America, where it was No 1 for five weeks, *Vol 2 . . . Hard Knock Life* follows the depressing pattern established by rapper Jay-Z's previous opus, *In My Lifetime Vol 1*.

A succession of guest artists, including Foxy Brown, DMX, Too Short and Memphis Bleek, are wheeled in to bolster the musings of the Brooklyn-born rapper who celebrates his grimly materialistic world-view with the customary displays of ultra-aggressive machismo on tracks such as *Money, Cash, Hoes*; *Ride or Die* and *Nigga What, Nigga Who*.

Samples from sources including the Isley Brothers and the theme from *Shaft* underline the lack of original thought, let alone wit, that is the album's besetting weakness. Only on the title track, with its incongruous little girl chorus sampled from the Broadway cast recording of the musical *Annie*, does the surly star bring anything out of the ordinary to this otherwise pointlessly self-aggrandising project.

DAVID SINCLAIR

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498

TOP TEN ALBUMS

		Title	Artist (Label)
1	(1)	Ladies & Gentlemen - the Best of	George Michael (Epic)
2	(2)	I've Been Expecting You	Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
3	(4)	Talk on Corners	Corrs (Atlantic)
4	(5)	Step One	Steps (Jive)
5	(3)	Where We Belong	Boyzone (Polydor)
6	(8)	Ray of Light	Madonna (Maverick)
7	(7)	The Best of 1980-1990	U2 (Island)
8	(23)	You've Come a Long Way, Baby	Fatboy Slim (Skint)
9	(6)	The Best of	M People (M People)
10	(17)	B*witched	B*witched (Epic)

COPYRIGHT CIN ● *Figure in brackets indicates last week's position*

Masters of American mojo

John Clarke delves deep into a monumental testament to the roots of American popular music

To produce a history of American popular music is a daunting enough task. Compiling a nine-volume CD set to go with it is a challenge of Richard Branson-like proportions. It is to author and compiler Allen Lowe's credit that he comes through it without having to ditch in an ocean of ready-made platitudes. *American Pop from Minstrel to Mojo: on record 1893-1956* (Cadence Jazz Books) is a provoking and thoughtful study of what Lowe terms Afro-American traditions "within a larger white society, in relation to which it has existed as both prisoner and liberator". He chose 1893 as a starting point because it marks a decade in which important records first started to be made and, he admits, "because I found a nice recording from that year which has acceptable sound and is historically appropriate".

That recording, *Mama's Black Baby* by the **Unique Quartette**, opens the set of nine CDs, *American Pop: An Audio History* (West Hill Audio Archives WH-1017, distributed in Britain by Harmonia Mundi), which accompanies the book. Although the CDs only go up to 1946 — ten years before the end of the period covered by the book — that doesn't really matter, since it is the formative years of American popular culture which prove the most fascinating. The Unique Quartette, for instance, are just that, a rare example of one of the earliest known recordings of a black vocal group singing a cappella, with gentle harmonies and a lilting melody. The link between them and Boyzone may be tenuous, but it's there. Other gems on volume one include pioneering black entertainer **Bert Williams's** *Nobody* (1906), **Al Jolson's** *You Made Me Love You* (1913) and the first blues artist to record, **Mamie Smith**, with *Sweet Man o' Mine* (1921).

As the discs — and the book — go on, Lowe attempts to cover every style and facet of popular music, from the early Cajun music of **Dennis McGhee**, to the jazz classics of **Louis Armstrong**, the vaudeville ribaldry of **Sophie Tucker** and the pensive border music of **Lydia Mendoza**. He also writes about each selection with an enthusiasm and knowledge that sends you scurrying to hear the track. Of **Blind Willie Johnson's** eerie, slide-guitar masterpiece *Dark Was The Night*, for instance, he says "only a black singer made motherless as a child, then rendered sightless by random irrational adult violence, condemned to live and wander in the most desolate reaches of the rural South and probably subject to waking nightmares of searing psychological heat as well as terrifying night visions of hell and damnation could have sung this".

As the millennium approaches there can be few better guides to the varied, fascinating and vastly influential music of the United States than this.

From there to another boxed set, this time devoted to a single artist, is not as giant a leap as it may sound. *The Complete Country & Western Recordings 1959-1968* by **Ray Charles** (Rhino R2 75328) is a four-CD set which shows how the blind pianist and singer blended soul, country and blues.

As the *American Pop* set shows, blues and country were not that far away from each other in the 1920s and 1930s. Songs, themes and idioms were shared and the first big star of the *Grand Ole Opry* radio show was black harmonica player **Deford Bailey**. But by the time Charles started to cover music in the late 1950s, the two styles had grown apart. It was Charles's inspired move that revealed to a new generation of listeners that country music was more than men in big hats.

Apart from establishing what came to be termed country soul, it also gave country music a much-needed shot in the arm. All those influential hits are here, including *I Can't Stop Loving You*, *Take These Chains from My Heart* and *Busted*. Classics, in whatever genre you place them.

Listen out for Nigeria's Femi Kuti, rising son of a famous father, and Ednaswap, America's hit-writing factory of a band

Quite a chip off the old Fela

En route from Paris to London by Eurostar, Femi Kuti is attracting a lot of attention thanks to his brightly coloured traditional Nigerian dress. Beside him sits his identically attired wife, Funke, who has been flicking through some French magazines, all of which have her husband on the cover. If both look a little exhausted, it is scarcely a surprise. The previous evening, Kuti had led his 13-strong troupe of musicians and dancers (Funke among them) through a breathtakingly energetic two-hour show at Montmartre's La Cigale. The pair then partied until the early hours of the morning.

For Kuti, it was a double celebration. In addition to selling out his first European show, he has signed a deal with the Polygram label Sound of Barclay which will result in the release of his famous father's extensive back catalogue. Consequently, this month the first ten of 50 albums by Fela Anikulapo Kuti, the undisputed inventor of Afrobeat, will be available in Britain. Sadly, Kuti Sr will reap none of the rewards: 18 months ago, he died of an Aids-related illness.

For 36-year-old Femi Kuti, his father's death had extraordinary repercussions. "In Nigeria my fans believe that my father is reincarnated in me," he explains. "For years nobody wanted to know me. Now I am worshipped as he was. I am expected to play his songs, to act like him, dance like him and dress as he did."

More importantly, Nigerians are counting on Femi, the eldest of Fela's three legitimate sons, to follow in his father's political footsteps. Fela was idolised not only for his funk-flavoured songs, but also for his socialist stand against the oppressive military regime which ruled Nigeria. Regularly imprisoned and tortured for his outspoken criticism of the Government, Fela devoted his life to the plight of the poor. His memorial service in Lagos, at which Femi played a concert, attracted more than a million mourners.



ALAN WELLER

Femi Kuti learnt a lot from his father, the legendary Fela Anikulapo Kuti — such as how not to bring up his own son

The younger Kuti's relationship with both his father and his father's fans has been far from straightforward. A member of Fela's sprawling band (which often numbered up to 80 players) from the age of 18, Femi quit after six years to form his own outfit, now known as the Positive Force.

"My father was furious when I left," he recalls. "He didn't utter one word to me for five years. Then in 1991 we started talking again and I asked to play at his club. After that we became very close, although a lot of his followers continued to refuse to acknowledge my music." The pair's reunion coincided with the release of Femi's second album, his own raw take on Afrobeat's funky fusion of soulful jazz, driving percussion and sharp social comment.

"I knew that my father had called my first album rubbish," says Kuti. "I launched the follow-up at his club. He sat in the audience and I could tell he was waiting for me to disgrace him again. I saw the shock on his face when we started to play. I watched him get up and dance. Then he came on stage and insisted he take a solo."

In 1995 Femi released *Wonder Wonder*, an album so accomplished that some critics insisted it had to have been written by his father. "It was a national scandal," says Kuti. "My father had to go to the papers to tell the people that they were not his songs."

Even if Fela were still alive, similar accusations could not be levelled at his son's latest album, *Shoki Shoki*. Although rooted in Afrobeat, short songs such as the infectiously poppy first single *Beng Beng Beng* have been brought up to date by a host of contemporary dance influences. "I grew up listening to acts like Michael Jackson and the Temptations," says Kuti. "I know the power of a four-minute song. My father's tracks could last up to an hour. I found that so frustrating. I may be destined to play Afrobeat, but that doesn't mean I can't make it my own. I love rock, rap, house and jungle. I want to introduce those sounds to my music. I want to take Afrobeat into the future."

Kuti has similar hopes for his three-year-old son, who is soon to start piano lessons. "My father bought me a trumpet at eight and a piano at 12, but I was never allowed a teacher. He always said that those with a gift don't need to be taught. I disagree."

In fact, Kuti has rejected several of his father's beliefs. While Fela extolled the virtues of marijuana, Femi (a reformed dope smoker) is against drugs and alcohol. While his father was famed for his promiscuity (he once "married" 27 women in a day), Femi is devoted to Funke.

It is Kuti's attitude towards his son, however, which marks him out as his own man. Despite now leading a group called Movement Against Second Slavery, Kuti refuses to use his young son as a political tool, as he himself was.

"I was taken out of school at 12 to protest with my father about soldiers being able to discipline students," he says. "I was arrested, locked up and beaten many times. I don't want to force my son to be like me. If he is not his own person, his life has no meaning."

LISA VERRICO

● *Beng Beng Beng is out now on Barclay/Polygram. Shoki Shoki is released on Feb 8*

Torn apart, doing fine

Muzak UK is the market leader in canned music, the provider of that infuriating soundtrack that pursues you around supermarket aisles and hotel lobbies. The company has just compiled its chart of last year's most-played songs and sitting at the top is Natalie Imbruglia's *Torn*.

You might think this would delight Anne Preven of Ednaswap. She wrote the song and stands to make enough royalties to retire to a tropical island. Yet she is appalled by her own success. "At the beginning it was weird and interesting. Now you can't get into an elevator without hearing it. It would be terrible if we were only known for *Torn*," she says.

Although you may not have heard of Preven's band Ednaswap, you soon will, for they happen to be some of the finest songwriters on the planet. *Sanctuary* from Madonna's *Bedtime Stories* album is another Ednaswap original, written by Preven and the band's guitarist, Scott Cutler.

Their supremely confident new album, *Wonderland Park*, proves there are plenty more where that came from and taps a rich vein of classic songwriting. Shrewd producers in search of an off-the-peg hit are no doubt plundering its radio-friendly melodies as we speak. Yet if there is any justice, the album should also finally establish Ednaswap as stars in their own right.

But first, to clear up the *Torn* saga. Back in 1993 and before forming their band, Preven and Cutler visited London. "We had met in New York and immediately clicked as songwriters," says Preven, who writes all the lyrics. "But we knew absolutely nothing about the music industry and the producer Phil Thornalley helped us to arrange some of our songs." They made a tape which included *Torn* and Thornalley began hawking it around. He eventually struck gold when he gave the song to Imbruglia and it became one of the biggest singles of 1998.



Madonna and Natalie Imbruglia are among the stars to be thankful for the songwriting talents of Ednaswap

For a long time Ednaswap were bitter, complaining that Imbruglia had never acknowledged their part in her success. "An interviewer said something nice about her lyrics and she just said, 'Thank you'. She didn't even mention us," Preven complained. Last month the royalties belatedly started trickling through and at the MTV Europe awards the Australian star managed a brusque thank you to Ednaswap as she waved her award for the song she didn't write.

"In the beginning she wasn't keen on drawing attention to the fact that she didn't write it," says a now mellower Preven. "She's done better since. It's all come out and it doesn't really matter."

If the Imbruglia experience made Ednaswap wary of others recording their songs, working for Madonna was far happier. "She was very open and respectful," Preven says. "She asked what we thought of her version. She was comfortable about letting others into the picture. At first I hated her version, but once I heard the album I understood what she was doing."

The five-strong Ednaswap formed in Los Angeles in 1994 when Preven and Cutler returned from London. They swiftly landed a record deal with EastWest on the strength of just four songs. "We were rehearsing in Scott's living-room and they came to hear us play an acoustic set," Preven recalls. "We only had four songs and we had to think of excuses to stop after we had played them all rather than admit we had no more."

The label thought it was signing an acoustic-based folk-pop band but, perversely, Ednaswap then went and made a big, melodramatic glam-rock album. "They were furious, especially with *Torn*. Our demo was more like Natalie's version and then we made it really heavy and obtuse," Preven says.

They were dropped, but their large live following meant they were immediately signed by another label. Their second album, *Wacko Magneto*, was intense and laden with layers of dense sound. "There were all our influences in there, from Led Zeppelin and AC/DC through to David Bowie," Preven says.

Wonderland Park was conceived as a solo project after the band almost split at the end of 1997. "It was the end of a long tour. We were burnt out and there were a lot of problems," Preven says. "We started writing in Scott's house and it sounded very different. I've always been a fan of singer-songwriters such as Joni Mitchell and I guess that started coming out. Eventually we realised there was no reason why it shouldn't be an Ednaswap record."

It is, in fact, the melodic folk-pop album their first label wanted. "It's a more manicured sound," admits Preven. "We wanted to allow more space so that the record highlights the songs rather than the arrangements. We got sick of riff rock. We felt we needed to make an album that was gentle and beautiful, with the lyrics and melodies out front."

What is left is an album of songs which will sparkle even when piped into an elevator. And this time, hopefully, it will be Ednaswap you hear singing them.

NIGEL WILLIAMSON

● *Wonderland Park is released by Island Records*

■ LISTINGS

Liz Lochhead in London

ARTS

■ JAZZ

Mike Westbrook's peak

RECOMMENDED TODAY



Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

WOYZECK: The London International Mime Festival opens with a mime-drama based on the Büchner play, accompanied by haunting cimbalon music and performed by the Josef Nadj Company from France. Purcell Room (0171-960 4242). Opens tomorrow, 8pm.

PERFECT DAYS: Siobhan Redmond's award-winning performance as the thirtysomething celebrity hairdresser longing for a baby. John Tiffany directs Liz Lochhead's poignant comedy. Hampstead (0171-722 9301). Opens tonight, 7pm.



Walter Weller conducts *Fidelio* in Birmingham

THE EXMOOR SINGERS: The award-winning mixed choir under James Jarvis opens its concert with Poulenc followed by Stravinsky, Schoenberg, Webern and Debussy. St John's (0171-222 1061). Tomorrow, 7.30pm.

LONDON SCHOOLS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: Dvorak's Cello Concerto and Joseph Suk's tragic masterpiece, the Asrael Symphony, comprise tonight's programme by the young musicians of the LSSO. Christopher Adey conducts. Barbican (0171-638 8891). Tonight, 7.30pm.

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: The renowned soprano Anne Evans heads a distinguished cast in a concert performance by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of *Fidelio*, Beethoven's only opera. Walter Weller conducts. Repeated next Thursday, 7.30pm. Symphony Hall (0121-212 3333). Tomorrow, 7pm.

GLASGOW: The glitz of 19th-century Vienna is recreated in two concerts by the Johann Strauss Orchestra directed by Christopher Warren-Green. With the Johann Strauss Dancers, decked out in period costumes. The Royal Concert Hall (0141-287 5511). Tomorrow and Sun, 7.30.

MANCHESTER: Vassily Sinaisky conducts the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra in the last concert in its series celebrating Russian music. Here Prokofiev's Second Violin Concerto is framed by Schnittke's *In Memoriam* and Rachmaninov's Third Symphony. Bridgewater Hall (0161-907 9000). Tomorrow, 7.30pm.

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only ◪ Some seats available □ Seats at all prices

□ **KRAPP'S LAST TAPE:** Edward Petherbridge's touring performance as Beckett's ancient sensualist replaying lost time. Also the rarely performed Breath:35 seconds long. Arts (0171-836 3334).

□ **QUATRE MAINS:** Astonishing dance for hands created by Andrew Dawson and Jozef Houben. Lyric Studio (0181-741 2311).

■ **CHICAGO:** Maria Friedman injects new blood into the hit revival of Kander and Ebb's musical about murder and fickle fame. Adelphi (0171-344 0055).

□ **JESUS MY BOY:** Tom Conti in John Dowie's fitfully amusing comedy giving Joseph's side of the story. Apollo, W1 (0171-494 5070).

◪ **PETER PAN:** Justin Salinger in the title role, with David Troughton as Captain Hook, in return of Fiona Laird's enjoyable production. Olivier (0171-452 3000).

◪ **THE SNOWMAN:** The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters soar over the audience in Bill Alexander's joyful production. Peacock, WC2 (0171-863 8222).

□ **THE KING AND I:** Whistle a happy tune with Phil Willmott's Steam Factory production of the feelgood Rodgers & Hammerstein musical. BAC (0171-223 2223).

□ **THE MERCHANT OF VENICE:** Gregory Doran's production from Stratford, chiefly notable for Philip Voss's superb Shylock. Barbican (0171-638 8891).

□ **ARABIAN NIGHTS:** Ali Baba, Sinbad and lesser known tales adapted and directed by Dominic Cooke for the Christmas show. Young Vic (0171-928 6363).

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

LITTLE VOICE (15): Mark Herman's wonderful version of Jim Cartwright's stage hit. Jane Horrocks sings glorious covers of torch song divas. Michael Caine, Ewan McGregor, Brenda Blethyn and Jim Broadbent sleaze around in the foreground.

THE SIEGE (15): Denzel Washington, Annette Bening and Bruce Willis trip over each others' bootlaces as they try to defuse an Arab terrorist offensive in Manhattan. Chillingly real, beautifully acted. Director Edward Zwick fingers a real raw nerve.

PSYCHO (15): Hopeless remake of Hitchcock's original. Gus Van Sant re-shoots this classic fear movie in colour, misses the ironies and misplaces the shuddering suspense. With Vince Vaughn and Anne Heche doing their worst to replace Anthony Perkins and Janet Leigh.

π (PI) (15): Low-budget sci-fi adventure by David Aronofsky that charts the madness of a genius mathematician who is haunted by nightmares and money-mad investors. Sean Gullette is the mesmerising lead.

ANGEL DUST (ICA): Cool, classy Japanese melodrama about a psychic detective who has to nail her former lover and mentor for killings on the Tokyo tube. Sogo Ishii directs a compelling, sophisticated psychodrama that ultimately has too many twists.

TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT (PG): A reassuringly scratchy reprint of Howard Hawks's 1944 classic in which Bacall shoots fish in a barrel and Bogart falls madly in love.

CURRENT

THE ACID HOUSE (18). Three darkly comic tales of drugs, drink and hallucination by Irvine Welsh. An indigestible onslaught. With Stephen McCole, Ewen Bremner, and Kevin McKidd. Director, Paul McGuigan

SITCOM (18): A French bourgeois family unbuttons itself. Mildly diverting lampoon, excellently acted ensemble cast. Director, Francois Ozon.

STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG): Patrick Stewart's Enterprise crew come to the rescue of a peaceable race who have found the elixir of youth. Lightly likeable. With Donna Murphy, F Murray Abraham. Director, Jonathan Frakes



In the first flush of success: the All Saints — Nicole Appleton, Melanie Blatt, Shaznay Lewis and Natalie Appleton — at last year's Brit Awards

Belly-buttons fluff it

A year ago All Saints were the elegant antidote to national Spice overload. So what went wrong?

CAITLIN MORAN

You may recall that at this time last year, All Saints were all that and a bag of chips. The vital bits of the dog. The bee's knees. Their timing was perfect — a mere week before the sublime *Never Ever* went to No 1, we were experiencing a Spice overload.

Spiceworld — The Movie had carpet-bombed Britain, by being the only thing to do on National Boredom Day, ie, Boxing Day, and left the nation feeling slightly queasy — if only for the product-placement scene, where the Spices sucked on Chupa-Chups while drinking Pepsi and eating Walker's crisps.

Compared to this pig-in-muck marketing, All Saints seemed like divine, elegant minimalism — a cleansing bowl of miso soup after a year of veal and cherry pie. It was impeccable timing: with their baggy combats and old men's vests, a stripped-down, sexy hymn and a dance that was a mere warm-up exercise ("Okay, now shake your shoulders girls and — relaaax"), it all seemed so 1998, so tasteful. Melanie Blatt was proudly flying the flag for gorgeous chicks with big noses; Shaznay Lewis was a successful black, female, British singer/songwriter — still a suspiciously under-represented force in the charts; and the two Appleton sisters seemed fairly inoffensive, in an *FHM* kind of way.

But a year later, it's all gone horribly pear-shaped. For starters, it must be the quickest implosion on record: after a mere 12 months, Natalie has stomped off; Melanie is breast-feeding until next Christmas; and the other two seem so sour and bored it's like watching polar bears banging their heads against the bars in a zoo. Their last couple of television appearances have given the impression that they are world famous for chewing gum and rolling their eyes: "It must have been an amazing year for you." "Yeh. Reelly tirin' tho. I'm just lookin' fo'wud to gettin' home forra bit." While "talks" have been going on over Christmas and the new year, trying to heal the rift and get the cash-cows on their feet again, it might be time to look at the reasons why the rift occurred in the first place.

Obviously, a lot of it is down to what happens in the first flush of fame: people go mad. Within a month of *Never Ever* going to No 1, everyone under the age of 30 was shivering in tiny vests and wearing their hair ironed, with one slide. Marks & Spencer now does combats for £29.99; and when M&S starts manufacturing the 1990s equivalent of Beatle wigs, you've obtained the level of fame that will chomp on your brains and destroy your reason within a week.

Another part of All Saints' current malaise can be put down to their dating arrangements. There is something disturbing about a group who all have famous boyfriends. In the past year Natalie has had an on/off thing with Robbie Williams; Nicole has been out and broken up with Jamie Theakston; Melanie became pregnant by the bass player with Jamiroquai; and Shaznay has propped up Damon Albarn at the bar.

Apart from the worrying signal that none of the All Saints has dated outside the Met Bar, it also suggests that the girls have only dated people who are already tremendously jaded by celebrity. It's a crash-course in ennui — fuelled by the fact that, if you are a famous couple, *This Morning with Richard and Judy* can power a whole phone-in on one of your front-page rows.

Another skein of tension is the interband chemistry. By all accounts, Shaznay is the creative force, Melanie the voice, and the Appleton sisters two of Melanie's friends along for the ride. With Melanie out of action for most of the year, Shaznay was left touring the world with a mate's mates — rather like those awkward nights when you arrange to go drinking with a mate and some of her friends, she cops off after 20 minutes, and you are left swigging Bud in the snug with two people you don't know that well. All you have to talk about is your mutual friend — and as Shaznay was reportedly none too happy that Melanie had got up the duff in the most important year of their career, that must have led to a lot of weighted comments and, ahem, pregnant silences.

Also, it's been embarrassingly obvious over the past year that the music industry is just as racist as we always suspected. While Melanie and Melanie's bump were plastered over magazine covers as part of some nascent Pregnancy is the New Grey movement, and the Appleton sisters were down to their pants and bra on the cover of *FHM* every month, Shaznay — the songwriter — only made the cover of black magazines. Now, I don't know how bitter you'd be if you wrote your band's No 1 single and were ignored, while your white mate's white mates turned into the nation's big *pin-up* girls, but I think I'd tut and fret a bit.

Of course, the main reason behind All Saints' current woes is the growing public recognition that *Never Ever* was a one-off, a glorious anomaly. During 1998 we were, metaphorically, repeatedly returning to that hedge where we *once* found a lost fiver, hoping to find another one, but just finding *Bootie Call* and *War of Nerves* instead. And while internal rivalries and justifiable bitterness keep Shaznay from following it up, *Never Ever* will be the albatross around their necks.

And besides, it's just *Amazing Grace* with beats.

Living the blues

MIKE WESTBROOK
The Orchestra of Smith's Academy
(Enja ENJ-9358 2)

AUTUMN 1992, when the live big-band portion of this album was recorded, marked an artistic peak for Mike Westbrook's jazz orchestra. Fresh from a three-day festival in Catania entirely dedicated to Westbrook music, the 22-piece band deliver material from projects ranging from *On Duke's Birthday* to *London Bridge is Broken Down* with their characteristic mix of tight discipline and bustling exuberance.

The grounding of a number of pieces in the blues (including a 23-minute bonus track, *Blues for Terenzi*, performed at 1995's Cheltenham Festival by the Steve Martland Band) renders them easily accessible, notwithstanding their harmonic and rhythmic complexities. But the cogency of Kate Westbrook's texts and the skilful deployment of a series of superb soloists — Anthony Kerr, Chris Biscoe, Alan Barnes, Peter Whyman and Dominique Pifarely among them — mark this record out as an archetypal Westbrook production: subtle, wide-ranging, intelligent, and irresistibly enjoyable.

JAZZ ALBUMS

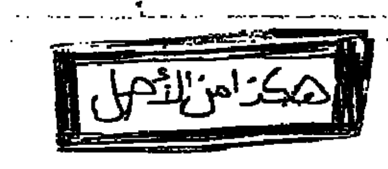
JUST EAST OF JAZZ
Swerve
(JEOJ CD2)

LIKE an increasing number of their contemporaries — from John Zorn's Masada ensembles in America to the Klezmer Swingers in Britain — Just East of Jazz operate on the cusp between traditional Jewish music and jazz.

Where Zorn's music utilises Ornette Coleman-based jazz, however, Just East of Jazz, a quintet formed in 1993, specialise in a jaunty fusion sound, spearheaded by Jeremy Shoham's reeds and the guitars of co-founder James Woodrow and briskly propelled by a punchy rhythm section (bass player Phil Scragg, drummer Rick Finlay), augmented by the bright keyboard work and occasional vocals of Hilary Cameron.

With material ranging from vigorous skirls incorporating the odd bebop lick to lightly swinging, almost samba-like wafts, and with the odd tricksy time signature drawing on Shoham's experience with Balkan music, *Swerve* — the band's second album — consolidates their growing reputation and serves as a fine appetiser for their upcoming 26-date British tour.

CHRIS PARKER



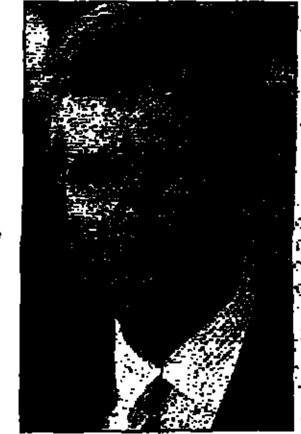
Left-wing flagship caught in friendly fire

The subtext to a possible magazine takeover mirrors Labour's wider battles, says **Roland Watson**

The political wreckage strewn round Westminster by the spate of resignations may have ruined the Government's Christmas, but it seems to have clarified the immediate future of the *New Statesman*.

By chance, two of the three government casualties directly affect the fortunes of the left-of-centre political weekly. Geoffrey Robinson, the former Paymaster General, owns it. Peter Mandelson, the former Trade Secretary, is best friend to the man who wants to own it.

It is one of the many ironies of the episode that while the two former ministers were friendly enough for Mr Robinson to lend Mr Mandelson £373,000 to buy his house,



Robert Harris: no bid yet

neither man is happy with the idea of the other exercising influence over comparatively small-circulation, loss-making magazine.

Their differences prompted Robert Harris, the millionaire author of such highly successful novels as *Fatherland* and *Enigma*, and friend of Mr Mandelson, to express his interest in buying the title in mid-December.

Before Christmas, the initiative lay with Mr Harris. He and his business partner, Nick Butler, honorary treasurer of the Fabians and a corporate affairs executive for BP, were putting the final touches to their finances and were planning to lodge a bid in the new year.

At the time, Mr Robinson looked a weak political figure following the relentless scrutiny of his past business links with Robert Maxwell. He was also constrained on the issue because the *New Statesman*, along with all his other outside business interests, had been placed in a blind trust out of his reach when he became a minister.

But all that has changed. With both men now out of office and adjusting to their new lives, the prospects of a proprietorial handover appear to have lengthened considerably. At the very least, nothing is imminent.

Mr Harris concedes as much. "Everything has been rather overtaken by events. At the moment the whole thing is in abeyance." He says he is waiting to hear from Mr Robinson. "Until that happens, we are completely in the dark."

If Mr Harris is unclear about the way ahead, Peter Wilby, the Editor of the *New Statesman*, is not. Having made no bones about his hostility to the idea of a takeover, he insists that it will not happen. "Geoffrey has given no indication that he wishes to sell it. It's still owned by Geoffrey Robinson. It has not been, and is not being, put up for sale. I welcome that."

Mr Wilby's conviction will hearten Labour traditionalists horrified at the prospect of the new Labour takeover implied by Mr Harris's interest. But it is unlikely to stem the private criticisms in Blairite circles of the *New Statesman*'s current regime, and the manoeuvring that has turned the fate of the magazine into a microcosm of wider political battles within the Labour movement.

Some inside Downing Street are downbeat about the *New Statesman* to the point of abuse. "The *New Statesman* is supposed to be a weekly, politically interesting, left-of-centre magazine. At the moment it's managing only one of these — it's coming out weekly," was the caustic observation of one senior Labour official.

Another spoke of the sense of disappointment inside No 10 that the *New Statesman* was not contributing to the political debate. "They feel, more in sorrow than in anger, that it has lost its way."

Those sort of sentiments fuel the fears on the Left that the Harris bid is little more than a front designed to shove aside Mr Robinson, Gordon Brown's friend, associate and benefactor, to make way for a Blairite takeover. The conspiracy theorists point out that Mr Butler's wife, Rosaleen Hughes, is a friend of Cherie Blair.

The scenario causes inevitable alarm at the *New Statesman*. "It would be very damaging indeed for an independent magazine to be shoved between the Treasury and Downing Street," said one insider.

However, the battle lines are as much about style as ideological stances.

Mr Robinson may be close to Mr Brown, but not even the Blairite critics can accuse him of using the magazine as a platform for the Chancellor in particular or the Brown camp in general. Insiders say he has avoided even the merest hint of editorial interference since taking over three years ago.

The would-be proprietor is also only too keenly aware of the dangers of becoming overtly partisan within the Labour Party. Mr Harris says that it would be the "absolute kiss of death" and insists that is not his motivation.

Instead he has characterised the magazine as arid and remote, contrasting it with the lifestyle columns of *The Spectator*, its right-wing rival, which sells about twice as many copies.

Despite his insistence that he has both the money — the likely price tag would be about £3 million — and the gameplan, there remain lingering doubts about how wholehearted Mr Harris's interest is, or what his motives are.

He says he revived a ten-year-old idea about owning the title after hearing Mr Robinson putting it about last year that he was interested in selling. However, nobody in the Robinson camp claims to have heard such murmurings. And although Mr Harris has signalled his interest twice to the magazine's governing trust, he has yet to table a bid.

One close observer of the saga suggests that Mr Harris wants it on one level, but that his interest is diminished by Mr Mandelson's departure from office.

Mr Harris's comments following the resignation drama do little to suggest otherwise. "I'm relaxed about it. If it happens, fine. If it doesn't, then OK," he told *The Times*.

The other great unknown is Mr Robinson. Those close to him say that he has not rescued the *New Statesman* from bankruptcy, bringing its annual losses down from £2 million to a projected £200,000, only to pass it on when it is on the brink of making money.

But although the current regime is convinced that he will hang on to it, the 60-year-old Mr Robinson faces a big decision now that he is freshly liberated from office. Is his future in politics, or does he return to a business career?

The fate of the *New Statesman* could rest on which way he goes.



Will Geoffrey Robinson sell up?

The prospect of negotiations between the former Paymaster General and Robert Harris appears to have dwindled

A reluctant editor's taste of success

Roger Alton was the fourth editor in five years when he arrived at *The Observer* last July to a daunting inheritance. Under *The Guardian*'s ownership, sales had fallen by 100,000 to an historic 50-year low of 403,000. After 24 successful years at *The Guardian*, where he had launched the G2 tabloid section after stints in news, sport, arts and features, it was hardly surprising that he was a reluctant editor.

His task of turning round *The Observer* is as difficult as any in national newspapers and will require long-term commitment from the Guardian Media Group. Yet after his first six months in the chair, Alton's *Observer* has suddenly started to click.

The best test of any newspaper is how many times it makes the reader want to stop and read as they browse through the pages. On that test, Alton has already made *The Observer* a more readable newspaper with a sharper news sense. He led the paper last Sunday on a report that Geoffrey Robinson had bankrolled Gordon Brown's opposition think-tank with up to £200,000, and put Nick Hornby's £2 million Penguin transfer deal on the front page when *The Sunday Times* relegated the story to its diary. Both stories were heavily followed up on Monday.

With its serious attention to politics and such commentators as Will Hutton, Andrew Marr and Andrew Rawnsley writing from the liberal Left, it is also becoming a must-read for those who follow the machinations of new Labour and find *The Sunday Times* and *The Sunday Telegraph* too Tory and Europhobic.

When a newspaper suddenly clicks, it is always fascinating to find out what qualities its editor has brought to his job. Alton's first achievement, according to his staff, is that he has simply made *The Observer* a nicer place to work after the in-fighting between the previous Editor, Will Hutton, and his deputy, Jocelyn Targett, a highly talented journalist who nevertheless inspired fear and loathing among older *Observer* hands.

Alton is a workaholic — a motivating, dominating, hands-on editor, who roams the office with a constant stream of ideas. He is not a writing editor but is a supreme technician — his journalists know that he can do almost every job as well as they can. Although 17 journalists were recently declared redundant, one result is a new sense of team spirit in an office that a year ago was riven by feuds. Another is a growing sense of self-confidence.

Alton's first job was to rid the paper of the worst excesses of the previous regime, the over-tricksy layouts, front pages that defied every newspaper textbook, and the magazine-style Review front that displayed a photograph with no accompanying text.

Since then, his main priority has been sorting out the main news section, still the beating heart of a proper newspaper, and making it easier for readers to find their way round the paper. Three new tabloid sections — Cash, Escape and Screen — were introduced last Sunday, boosting the total to eight, and there will be TV advertising to sell the paper this weekend. The new sections represent a significant investment by the GMG management as well as a clear signal of their faith in Alton as the Editor who may at last turn the tide.

With *The Sunday Times* out of sight, his main battle is to see off the *Independent on Sunday*. *The Observer* outsells the "*Sindy*" by 150,000, but the latter also has a new Editor in Kim Fletcher and a new owner in Tony O'Reilly, who is equally determined to carry the battle to *The Observer*. When *The Observer* introduced its three new sections last week, the *Sindy* responded by cutting its cover price to 50p in the North and Midlands and achieved a significant lift in sales.

An ailing newspaper cannot be transformed overnight: if Alton's early success continues, it will be at least a year before its lost readers start to notice. The best that can be said after the first six months is that he has held *The Observer*'s sales at around 400,000 after five years in which it consistently fell. Given the ferocious competition from the three rival Sunday broadsheets, he will have done well if *The Observer* is selling an extra 25,000 copies by the end of the year.

Hunting of the Nark

JUST when we thought that standards in the Mandelson-Brown battle could sink no further, the discredited Mandelsonian lobbyist Derek "Dolly" Draper drops the bombshell that he was recently taunted about his clinical depression by a member of the Brown camp. Draper, who famously boasted that he could arrange meetings with Cabinet Ministers, has been forced to reveal that he was treated at The Priory clinic last autumn for the illness, from which he has suffered for four years.

In a column in *The Spectator* he reveals that he received an unkind pager message about his affliction which was sent, he seems to think, by *The Mirror's* political editor, Kevin Maguire.

Draper, who has criticised Maguire's friendship with Charlie Whelan in the past, denies labelling Maguire "Whelan's Nark". However, that did not stop his pager recently bleeping with the message: "You'll end up back in the Priory, from the Nark."

■ WHEN Christopher Dunkley was sacked from Radio 4's *Feedback*, there was an outcry. But a bigger scandal is the way *Points of View* on BBC1 is withering away. Extended to 15 minutes under Anne Robinson, then handed over to Carol Vorderman, it has been off the air since August, is missing from the new winter schedule and now, I hear, it is not coming back in the same form.

With *Biteback* also dropped, the late-night BBC2 discussion show *Off Air* binned, and softer *Feedback* off until Easter, this means that there is nowhere on BBC networks for people to voice their views. But with the licence fee reaching the £100 barrier, increasing protests at the BBC's over-enthusiastic adoption of "letterbox" format in advance of cheap digital TV sets, and repeats clogging up prime time, it suits the bigwigs to stifle debate. The concept of an independent watchdog — an Oftelly for viewers — becomes more attractive.

■ I'M ONE of many journalists who has taken the occasional call from Sophie Rhys-Jones and she stands out



for one reason: she is polite, and is prepared to take "sorry not interested" for an answer. This does not make her a hot-shot PR, and the truth is that she was encouraged by her former boss, Brian MacLaurin (who remains a friend), to set up her own business in 1996 because her romance with Prince Edward made her more famous than the agency's clients. Her company has prospered — turnover is around £400,000 a year — thanks largely to a select roster of royal accounts. The royal couple, incidentally, have the BBC and ITN on tenterhooks: their choice of St George's Chapel, Windsor, for a "family wedding" suggests that TV cameras will be excluded.

■ AMID the fuss about revamping *Newsnight* and *Channel 4 News* — both pretty successful efforts — I would advise the Independent Television Commission (ITC) to keep an eye on Channel 5 over its elastic definition of what constitutes current affairs. Independent producers are tendering ideas to replace its regular respected *What's the Story?* slot, provided for the past two years by Twenty Twenty Television. Under its licence Channel 5 must screen an hour of current affairs each week. Previous attempts to include consumer programmes in the quota were scuppered by the ITC. I'm told sex, crime and sensationalism are favoured after C5's hits with *The Real Monty* and *Swindon Superbabes*. There is a definite change, say insiders, since Chris Shaw replaced Tim Gardam as head of factual programmes. In his new job as C4's Director of Programmes, Gardam — a former editor of *Newsnight* — is making waves to stop it becoming a gravy train. He is attending C4's programme finance meetings and cancelling projects — unless they provide value for money.

■ YOU lose one battle, then regroup for the next. Just before Christmas the BBC lost the argument for an inflation-busting leap in the licence fee. Its campaign never recovered from Sir John Birt's honesty in blurting out his designs last summer before a PR campaign was prepared. But on January 20, Sir Christopher Bland, the BBC Chairman, launches the next push: a collection of essays on the theme Public Purposes in Broadcasting, from economists. It is designed to influence a new BBC review panel appointed to advise Chris Smith, the Culture, Media and Sports Secretary, about the corporation's future.

News makeovers owe a debt to Street-Porter, says **Michael Gove**

Here is the TV news, according to Janet

SOMETIMES you have to fail magnificently that others might succeed. And nowhere is that more painfully true than in broadcasting. Television's least-watched programmes are often its most influential. Such shows as *Stab in the Dark*, which I once presented and which won a reputation as the biggest turkey to flutter on to Channel 4, have influenced successors such as the successful Mark Thomas series on the same channel. And the recent makeover of *Channel 4 News* and BBC 2's *Newsnight*, the two factual flagships of their respective stations, owes a great deal to a broadcasting innovator whose pioneering shows were considered less than glorious.

The broadcasting mother who failed herself, but succeeded magnificently through her children, is Janet Street-Porter. She was the pioneer of a broadcasting genre, "Yoof TV", which secured more bad notices than viewers. But the last laugh is hers. The techniques she pioneered, while almost no one, save critics, were watching, have permeated mainstream TV. The first "yoof" show which she brought to term was an ITV Sunday lunchtime show called *Network 7*. It sought to create a greater sense of intimacy and accessibility by using roving presenters in a set designed to look post-party. Clubbers were expected to rise bleary-eyed at noon on the sabbath and absorb a mix of current affairs and lifestyle features. It wasn't only the content that was an exotic melange, but the presentation. The presenters' pieces to camera were supplemented with complementary sources of information, whether facts running ticker-tape style at the bottom of the screen or footage running alongside the presenter in vision.

The classic style of TV presentation was always to aim for the uncluttered. The screen was to be filled with either studio, pre-packaged film, or a graphic listing facts. Mixing them on screen was a solecism, an offence against TV grammar. But Street-Porter's respect for any conventional form of grammar has always been small. She sought to mix as enthusiastically as any DJ in the clubs her prospective viewers frequented. Older critics found the competing sources of information ugly and bewildering. The same might have been said of some of the



Topical: Jeremy Paxman on *Newsnight*

presenters. But whatever the individual's failings, the concept struck a chord.

For teens and twentysomethings, the idea of absorbing stimuli simultaneously from different sources was becoming commonplace. *Network 7* was aimed at a generation that did its homework while listening to music, or watching the TV, and still got A passes. It was the same generation who grew up screen-literate and are at home running several programmes on their PC while keeping an ear cocked at their sound system. The first multimedia generation found nothing strange in *Network 7's* style.

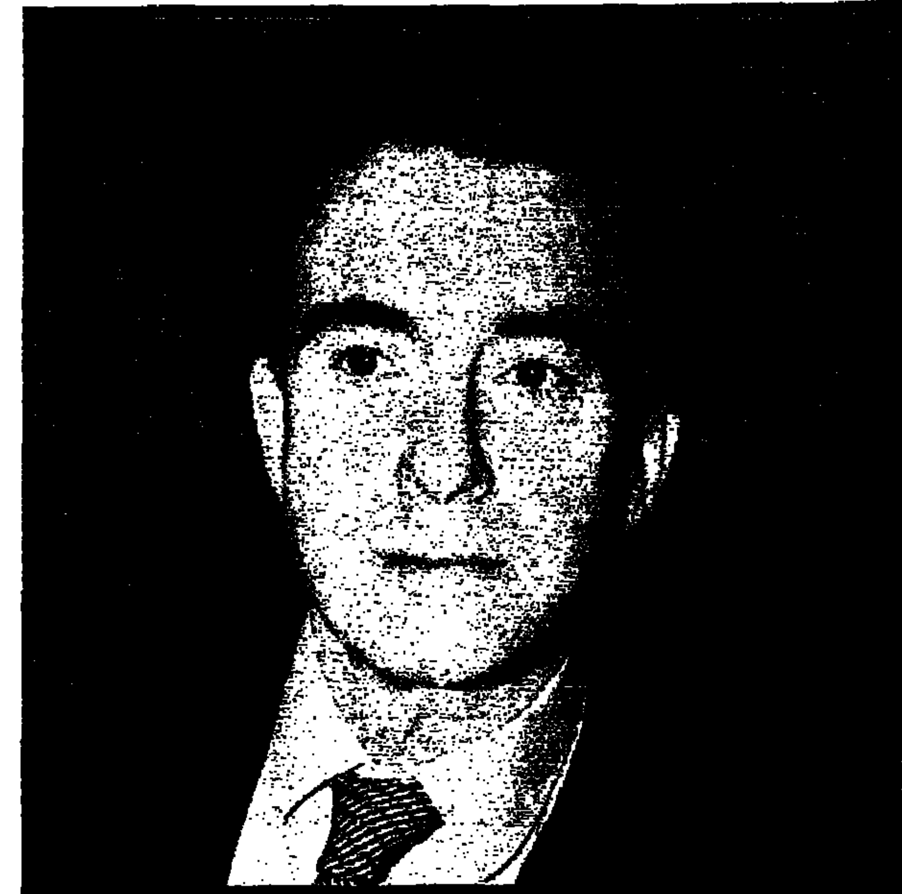
That is why they will be at home with the new *Newsnight* and Channel 4 News. The sight of presenters in informal sets, or reading their cues while images run in the background, is comfortable for them. But their seniors may complain that too much is going on and that the presentation is hectic and confusing.

The greater informality of news presentation overall has so far been attributed not to Street-Porter, but to the success of *Channel 5 News*. The sight of Kirsty Young striding around the Channel 5 newsroom while five facts roll off the graphic display has excited executives. But *Channel 5 News* is a child of the Street-Porter revolution. And it is no coincidence that one of *Channel 4 News*' highest-profile signings from Channel 5, the talented correspondent Sarah Smith, first cut her teeth under Street-Porter, along with many others in the mainstream.

It would be wrong to overestimate the scale of change on the two flagships. The BBC prefers to term the changes on *Newsnight* a "refresh" rather than a relaunch. Jon Snow has been at pains this week to stress that the opportunities created by technical innovation will not usurp traditional news judgments.

But, in the spirit of broadcasting balance, it would be wrong to deny the debt that Paxman, Snow, Wark and others owe to the snaggle-toothed innovator.





Resigned spin meisters: Charlie Whelan, left, who has decided to step down as the Chancellor's press officer, and Peter Mandelson, the fallen Trade and Industry Secretary

Carry on spinning, doc

Reports on the death of the spin-doctor are exaggerated, despite recent political traumas, says **Chris Buckland**

The glum faces at Westminster this week did not belong only to Labour politicians surveying the damage and corpses left behind after their Government's Christmas turf wars.

A small group of political journalists had reason to look anxious, too. The departure of Chancellor Gordon Brown's amiably thuggish spin-doctor, Charlie Whelan, threatened to leave their newspapers with gaping white holes in future.

For some, Whelan acted as a life-support machine. Desperate for a story to meet an editor's demand for exclusives? Ask Charlie. Need a reaction to a slight, real or imagined, on his boss? Ask Charlie. Want a good quote about one of the Chancellor's Cabinet enemies? Ask Charlie.

And, as Whelan admitted, he would not always let veracity get in the way of a good story. To say that he was sometimes economical with the truth is being economical with the truth itself. The icing on this half-baked cake was that the intrepid reporters did not even have to leave the bar. They knew when they could find Whelan in his favourite spinning spot, the Red Lion pub in Whitehall. More often than not he would hunt them down in the Commons' Stranger's Bar to pass on his latest *mal mot*.

Of course, the lucky few of "Charlie's angels" who consistently wrote favourable reports about the Chancellor are not the only ones who are now concerned that rigid clamps are about to be put on their lifeblood — information.

Whelan is suspected of punishing those who refused to toe the line by freezing them out. He was even thought to have suggested that editors should sack senior political staff. But the fallout from his briefings kept everyone in business for days or even weeks. The concern among the entire pack of political journalists is much deeper. The question they are pondering after a fortnight of trauma for the Government is: are the days of the spin-doctor over?

The spin-doctor's answer might be that things will now change dramatically. But the real reply, in words adapted from the Charlie Whelan lexicon of reactions to unfriendly stories, is "garbage and rollocks". And he should know. Several days after announcing that he had decided to leave his hero-boss's employ, Whelan was acting as though little had changed, meeting friends and going through his enemy list, suggesting what terrible fates he had in store for them.

The Whelan Enemy No 1, Peter Mandelson, who resigned as Trade and Industry Secretary, will never return to front-rank politics if Brown's bruiser can help it. And Mandelson, the first and greatest spin-doctor since that word arrived on these shores from America circa 1990, can hardly be expected to keep quiet if his foe keeps up the attack. Neither can the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, the Chancellor's longstanding antagonist.

Of course, there may be a short period of silence, although the first signs this week point in the opposite direction.

As he tours South Africa with Mr Blair, the Prime Minister's chief spin-doctor, Alastair Campbell, is making plans to bring the other practitioners to heel now that he has seen his desire to dump Whelan fulfilled — though months too late, thanks to Brown's obduracy.

Campbell makes no apology for giving the Government his most favourable spin. How could he? Labour became acceptable to Middle England only because the spin-doctors reassured them that the party was "new" and unthreatening.

Whelan's greatest victory was to persuade every newspaper in the land to carry friendly headlines on their reports of last year's Budget by playing to their own enthusiasms. But how can Downing Street stop the negative side of the spinner's art short of tapping press officers' phones and having them followed by private detectives.

Senior politicians are right to fear the power of the media to determine the pace and outcome of events. And they see their spin-doctors as a first line of defence in stopping unfavourable stories gaining a momentum of their own, classically displayed in the case of Peter Mandelson and his loan from the former Paymaster General Geoffrey Robinson.

But, more than that, spinning is in the very bloodstream of new Labour and cannot suddenly be stopped when bad blood between colleagues boils over.

We may not again see two practitioners in the moulds of Charlie Whelan and Peter Mandelson, but that hardly matters. They are of a breed that will not stop spinning even in their political graves.

Party invitation is in the post

TRADE

■ THE Labour Party has appointed a new direct marketing agency in an attempt to halt the slide in its membership, **Marketing Week** reports. The agency Brann London will spearhead the recruitment drive, with strategies that could include family membership and life membership deals. Thousands of members have deserted Labour since the 1997 election, with the total down to 390,000 from a high of 420,000. A few weeks ago the party dismissed its former agency because of a disagreement over strategy. The Conservatives, who are also trying to build membership and boost fundraising, have appointed an in-house marketing expert, Jane Keene.

■ THE former managing director of London Weekend Television, Eileen Gallagher, has been appointed to the board of Chris Evans's Ginger Media Group and will be responsible for its television interests, **Broadcast** reports. She replaces Michael Foster, who left last September after a row over strategy. Ginger's chief executive, David Campbell, says that the company wants to develop television shows other than those in which Mr Evans appears, and several are in the pipeline. Ms Gallagher will remain a director of *Shed Productions*, an independent company that she set up with Brian Park and Ann McManus last year.

■ THREE stories in **Marketing** suggest that a concerted attempt is under way to persuade us to gamble more of our savings. Camelot, the National Lottery operator, is to relaunch its Instant scratch cards next month, using the slogan "If you're game, we are". From a peak of £871 million in the six months after their launch in 1995, sales of the cards were down to £326 million in the first half of last year. Meanwhile, the National Bingo Gaming Association has hired a new agency to revamp its image, and bookmakers Coral Racing are seeking to develop interactive betting services on television.

■ CHANNEL 4's late-night youth show *The Word*, axed in 1995 after complaints that it was too raunchy, is to return in March, says a report in **Broadcast**. The independent producer Planet 24 has been commissioned to proace ten half-hour episodes of the pogramme. They will include clip from previous series as well as rw material. Terry Christian, one the original presenters, will retur to the show.

■ THE millennim bug will be one of the bigpublic relations issues of the yea, and **PR Week** analyses the prolems it will bring. The Cabinet Offie has appointed a ten-man heavy ob of PR officers to make sure th people are neither complace nor unduly alarmed. AdriarRoxan, the head of PR for the Adit Commission, threatens to shae public officials into compliance "Things are certainly going tcgo wrong," he warns. "Public bmiliation may be needed to bringsome authorities upo scratch."

■ HANDLEBAR to hadlebar conflict is iminent in the wrld of mountain be magazines, acording to the **Press Gzette**. Cabal Communications habought the ailing *Maximum Mcntain Bike* and plans to turn it ito a direct rival of IPC's brand leaer *Mountain Bike Rider*. The firsshot in the battle was fired last smmer when Cabal lured several fomer *MBR* journalists away fro IPC, including *Brant Richard the former editor*, who will now et *MMB*. The editorial office will love from London to West Yorkire and the first issue of the rvamped title will appear next mnth.

■ CRYSTAL-BLL gazers at **Marketing Week** hve been trying to forecast consumr trends in the 21st century. Shops ill change their displays several tnes a day "to suit the particular mdset"; sophisticated computers wll become part of the family; wshable electronic clothing will ctain built-in mobile phones; anwe shall be shopping for neutricticals — food with added health bnefits. Small wonder that Ira Mathia, the chief executive of the Brad Futures Group at Young and Ruicam, thinks that people will seek ntidotes to all this change. He belies that ultramodern will becomeassé: "True luxury these days liein the comforting patina of the pat"

MICHAL LEAPMAN





High-profile Radio 1 disc jockeys can turn a quirky tune from small-time music industry players into a smash hit, as Chris Moyles, left, did with Chef, and Zoë Ball achieved with *Tequila*, by the Bradford band Terrorvision, inset

DJs with Midas touch

In the post-Evans era, Radio 1 is finding it has not lost the power to influence record sales. **Chris Ayres** reports

Switch on any pop radio station over the next few days and you are likely to hear a chirpy little song, *Tequila*, by a rock band from Bradford called Terrorvision. The early success of the song — likely to zoom straight into the Top Ten on its release later this month — marks the second time in the past four weeks that Radio 1 has used its enormous power to "create" a hit.

If Zoë Ball, Radio 1's hyperactive breakfast DJ, had not given *Tequila* a frequent and gushing endorsement on her morning show — and on *Twenty-First Century Pop* (in which Radio 1 DJs predict the hits of 1999) — it is unlikely the song would already be on the play list of most of Britain's regional stations.

Similarly, Chris Moyles, Radio 1's yobbish afternoon DJ (who many see as the next Chris Evans), had an enormous influence on the Christmas charts through tirelessly plugging *Chocolate Salty Balls* by Chef, a spin-off from the cult cartoon series *South Park*.

It seems that although most music industry pundits believe that Radio 1's influence has diminished over the years, it is still seen as the best platform from which to launch a new act. Moyles, for example, begged his audience to buy the record before Christmas and so prevent the Spice Girls from topping the charts. More than 500,000 copies of *Chocolate Salty Balls* were sold in just 14 days and, during the Christmas week, it became the biggest-selling record for 14 years, not actually to top the charts (reaching number two). The week after, it replaced the Spice Girls' *Goodbye* at number one.

Jason Reckham, a product manager at Sony's Columbia Records, says of *Chocolate Salty Balls*: "In America, the single was banned by the CBS network and we had no plans to release it as a single over here. But once we had heard Chris Moyles play it on Radio 1 a few times we decided we could release it without it being banned. Of course, as soon as Radio 1 played it, all the wacky breakfast shows on independent local stations started playing it. It would have been the Christmas No 1 if we had got the stock out fast enough."

It must be something of a relief for Radio 1 to see its new star DJs finally building up the kind of power enjoyed by Chris Evans when he was at the station. Evans has seen his once-awesome influence over the music industry diminish while at Virgin Radio. The other good news for the BBC is that the revitalised Radio 2 is now as likely to create hits as Radio 1. Recent chart success enjoyed by acts such as pop band The Corrs and veteran rockers Aerosmith — given hours of airplay on Radio 2 — is proof of that.

Earlier examples of Radio 1 DJs having the power to create hits can be found by turning to Mark and Lard, the duo who took over the breakfast show after Evans left. They were instrumental in breaking an obscure act called White Town by playing *Your Woman*. Similarly Pete Tong, a Radio 1 specialist DJ, was responsible for Underworld's *Born Slippy* charting.

Radio 1 is understandably proud of its ability to make or break new acts, yet DJ endorsements are not always as straightforward as they appear. According to Simon Garfield, author of a book about Radio 1 called *The Nation's Favourite*, individual DJs are only occasionally allowed personally to choose records, with most of the station's play list decided by a committee of producers.

Alex Jones-Donelly, a music scheduler at Radio 1, agrees: "In the case of Chef, Chris Moyles and his producer came across it and decided to play it. But we already had an awareness of it and gave them encouragement to play it." And Zoë Ball? She was "certainly part of that decision" [to play *Tequila*].

However, it seems that in many cases Radio 1 allows its DJs to take sole credit for breaking records, even when the decision to play them has been made by a much larger group. DJs, of course, are keen to go along with this. Like Chris Evans, Zoë Ball and Chris Moyles realise that by associating themselves with certain records, they can manipulate their public image. It is no surprise, therefore, that Ball chose to endorse *Tequila* — a happy-go-lucky "indie" anthem about the joys of boozing — while Moyles chose *Chocolate Salty Balls* — a risqué spoof packed with sexual innuendo. Jonathan King, the music industry pundit, says: "I think Chris Moyles and Zoë Ball are very wise to start backing songs. Most DJs have very little say at all over what gets played because most of them are brain-dead and have to be told what to do. But when they do have an influence, it can be enormous."

Record companies recognise this power and often bring forward release dates (*Tequila*, for example) after a DJ's endorsement. "The best record companies will realise that having a DJ on-side is a major advantage," says King, "and if they have any sense they will give credit to the DJ to boost his or her ego."

This raises questions about Radio 1's place in an increasingly commercial industry. Garfield says: "There is a very interesting relationship between a publicly funded broadcaster such as Radio 1 and the commercial world because they still have the power to launch a career and make millions of pounds for a record company. But I think they are aware of that responsibility."

Football's biggest battle kicks off

John Goodbody and Ray Snoddy on the court case about to begin over TV rights

At 10.30am on Tuesday, one of the most significant television football contests for years kicks off in Court 21 in Chichester Rents, off Chancery Lane in central London — the court where the sons of Robert Maxwell were tried.

This time the multimillion-pound battle is between the English Premier League and the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), which has asked the Restrictive Practices Court to decide whether the league's exclusive television rights deals with broadcasters are the work of a cartel operating against the public interest. Unless a last-minute deal is brokered, and so far there is no sign of one, the case is likely to last four months; an appeal on a point of law could see it run deep into the 1999/2000 football season.

At the heart of the issue is the £670 million deal between the Premier League and BSkyB for coverage of exclusive live games and the BBC's £73 million payment for broadcast highlights on *Match of the Day*. Apart from the cost — the Premier League estimates that its legal bill alone could reach £7.5 million — the implications of the case are enormous for how all major sports appear on television.

The Premier League is even worried that if the court rules that it cannot negotiate television rights collectively, it could lead to a break-up of the league, with the big clubs such as Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur leading a breakaway in search of the best television deals.

John Bridgeman, the Director-General of Fair Trading, believes that by selling its rights collectively and exclusively to the highest bidder on behalf of its members, the league is acting as a cartel.

"The net effect of cartels is to inflate costs and prices," he argues. "Any other business acting in this way would be subject to competition law and I see no reason why the selling of sport should be treated differently."

The OFT believes that the deal with BSkyB, in which News International, parent group of *The Times*, has a 40 per cent stake, artificially restricts the number of games that football fans can see on television. The deal allows 60 of the 380 Premier League games each season to be shown live. The competition body argues that viewers would like the opportunity to see more football and that the market should be allowed to decide the number of games shown and at what price.

OFT officials, who talk of "when we win" rather than "if", insist they are acting on behalf of the consumer and deny that there would be chaos if individual clubs were required to negotiate their own television deals. David Elstein, chief executive of Channel 5, who is appearing as an expert witness for the Premier League, disagrees and will give a warning that broadcasters do not want to buy individual matches. "Football would suffer a major loss of revenue if the OFT wins," he will argue.

Mr Elstein believes that BSkyB would then buy up the rights to the top 12 clubs at a lower price than the current market value — and that not many would be interested in becoming "second-best broadcasters" by buying up the rights to clubs such as Coventry and Southampton. As an insurance policy, BSkyB is trying to buy Manchester United for £623 million — a takeover now being investigated by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

On the other side, Michael Grade, former chief executive of Channel 4, will give evidence as an expert witness on just how valuable football is to television, while Richard Horwood, head of Mirror Television, has been subpoenaed by the OFT to tell of his unsuccessful bid, with Carlton Communications, for the Premier League rights.

Mr Horwood would clearly be interested in buying smaller packages of rights if they became available at the right price, as almost certainly would Lord Hollick, chief executive of United News & Media, another unsuccessful bidder last time.

The position of Carlton is particularly tricky. As a 50 per cent owner of ONdigital, the digital terrestrial television group, the company depends heavily on its deal to broadcast Sky Sports — including all the live Premier League games — to get its new venture off the ground.

Michael Green, chairman of Carlton, also wants access to his own football rights, and may square the circle by supporting the current Premier League-BSkyB deal, which lasts until 2001. He could then argue that the system should be opened up after that.

Ironically the Premier League, which regards Tuesday's case as backward-looking and a waste of time and money, wants to be on every broadcasting platform, including free-to-air television, after 2001. "We will try to get the right pieces in the right place to create a coherent whole," says Peter Leaver, the league chief executive. By then pay-per-view football will almost certainly be available on digital television, which should enable the market to decide how much fans are prepared to pay to watch, at the very least, the away games of their favourite teams.

HUGH ROUTLEDGE



The Premier League fears a new TV deal could see big clubs such as Arsenal and Spurs break away

BBC pays price for library sale

IN A striking example of dramatic irony, the BBC has been forced to hire back part of the valuable photographic library it sold off for a song to make a drama about a valuable photographic library threatened with the scrapheap.

The three-part BBC2 serial *Shooting the Past*, which begins on Sunday, stars Timothy Spall, Lindsay Duncan, Billie Whitelaw and Emilia Fox as a group of archivists trying to save a picture collection. "It struck me as extraordinary that the BBC should have to hire back what it once owned," says the drama's author, the playwright Stephen Poliakoff, who was inspired to write *Shooting the Past* after hearing about the knock-down sale of another picture library, from the EMI-owned Borehamwood Studios, to the Star Wars producer George Lucas in the late Eighties.

Though neither the Hulton Getty picture library nor the BBC will disclose the hire fees being charged, it would cost the average film-maker £60,000-£70,000 to borrow the 4,600 images used in the series.

The collection was founded in 1938 by Edward Hulton, the publisher of *Picture Post* magazine. Twenty years later it was snapped up by the BBC for a bargain £100. Then, in 1988, the corporation sold it to the cable TV entrepreneur Brian Deutsch for £1.5 million.

Deutsch sold the library on for £10 million to a group of private investors and, in 1996, Mark Getty, grandson of the oil billionaire John Paul, purchased it for £30 million for his company Getty Images. His major rival for control of the so-called visual content industry is Microsoft's Bill Gates, who has been buying up the rights to images throughout the world.

Thanks to the expansion of the Internet and Millennium fever, the value of stock libraries has rocketed, with the Hulton Getty worth tens of millions of pounds. It is the UK's biggest picture library with a global turnover of £4 million a year.

"The BBC sold off its heritage when everything was being hived off to indie programme-makers," says Matthew Butson, the Hulton Getty's general manager. "The picture library didn't fit into the BBC's corporate plan in 1988 and they wanted the storage space: the accountants were so short-sighted."

Shooting the Past was made for the BBC by the independent production company Talkback, which hired the Hulton photographs. According to a BBC spokeswoman, the bulk of the photographs used in *Shooting the Past* were not from the BBC collection but had been acquired more recently by the Hulton Getty.

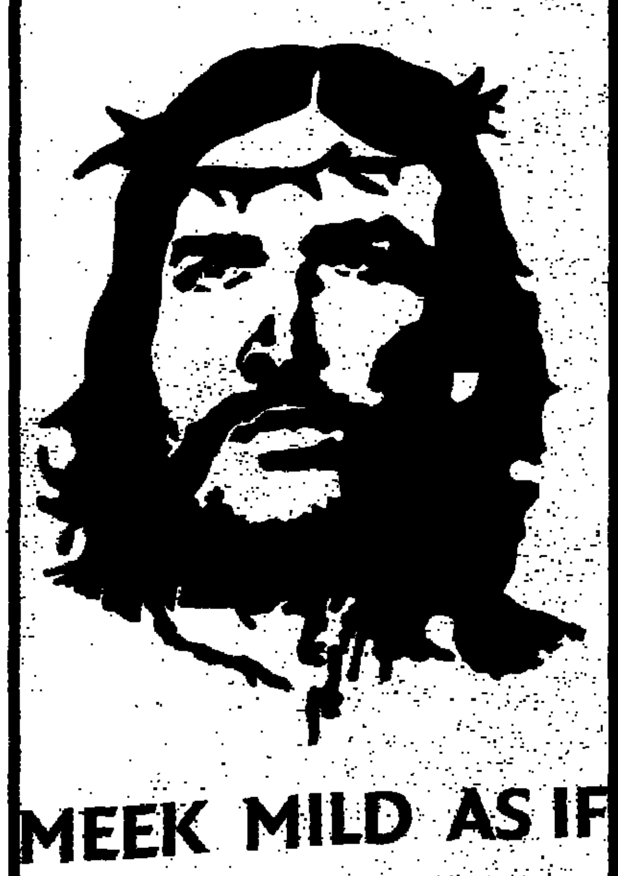
The corporation is not alone in selling its heritage for a mess of potage. Over the past two decades many newspapers and magazines have been indulging in an orgy of stock-shedding. "*Vogue* binned original prints by the fashion photographer Yousuf Karsh that now fetch £5,000-£7,000 each," says Butson. And the BBC acquired the *Evening Standard* and *Express* picture libraries in 1984, incorporating them into the Hulton.

The industry's loss has become Getty's gain, enabling this farsighted entrepreneur to emerge as a major media player.

MAUREEN PATON

● *Shooting the Past will start on Sunday, January 10, at 10.10pm on BBC2.*

Praying for a revolution



Christ as Che: no shock tactic, say campaign organisers

■ CHE GUEVARA, an Argentinian Marxist, might seem an odd choice to represent Jesus Christ in the latest controversial ad campaign from Christians in Media, a group of media professional volunteers working under the auspices of the Churches Advertising Network (CAN), an ecumenical group made up of representatives from the mainstream churches.

But in the group's Easter ad campaign, Che does indeed appear as Christ, together with the pithy strapline: "Meek Mild As If. Discover the real Jesus. Church. April 4."

Inevitably, the campaign has split the Church. Some clergymen and churchgoing politicians have condemned it, with reactions varying from "bad taste" to "sacrilegious". The CAN has defended the poster as an attempt to prove that Jesus was not a wimp, and has denied using shock tactics.

This last claim is a tad disingenuous. True, Guevara and the popular image of Christ share long, dark hair and intense eyes, but you cannot hope to portray Christ as a communist revolutionary and not upset people.

The entirely defensible truth is that the CAN wanted to create ads that got noticed and to engender media coverage in this continuing slack week. As such, it has worked, just as the group's controversial effort in 1996 describing the Virgin Mary's "bad hair day" worked. But it all seems a little desperate — almost a tacit admission that Easter has been lost to the chocolate and fluffy chick manufacturers.

And perhaps it has. Christians attempting to reverse falling congregations appear to be an easy media target; damned if they do something, damned if they don't.

We will only know whether the campaign worked after Easter. Personally, I am not sure whether advertising can drag people up aisles other than those in supermarkets. The Church appears to be in greater need of a long-term PR campaign aimed at the disaffected young. We should not knock the well-intentioned creators of the Christ-as-Che campaign for trying. But might they be trying too hard?

■ THE McDonald's birthday offer of two big Macs for the price of one was also well-intentioned, designed as it was to celebrate the chain's 25th anniversary in the UK. It also fell victim to the slack news week. Reporters on their first day back at the office pounced on a gift story — that demand had outstripped supply. Unusually, it had already appeared in some papers on Monday before *The Sun* and the *Daily Star* splashed with it on Tuesday (curiously, *The Mirror* gave it three paras on page 17).

Stefano Hatfield

The *Daily Star*'s report of chaos in the high streets was typical of the embellishments that McDonald's had to endure. But although the chain was embarrassed, it was nothing like as bad a gaffe as the Hoover free flights debacle with which it has been compared.

Once the bungle had been revealed, McDonald's, in stark contrast to Hoover, moved with alacrity to take public apologies in the papers and to move to its next celebratory price promotion: half-price cheeseburgers.

Although I am surprised that a marketer as sophisticated as McDonald's could so underestimate demand (did it forget that children were still on holiday, or that the greedy British public will do anything for a freebie?), it recovered well. Used to dealing with negative publicity, McDonald's will know that this past week could have been worse.

What if no one had wanted a Big Mac, even for free?

■ AD INDUSTRY insiders will know that McDonald's was simply a victim of the curse of *Campaign*, wherein an accolade from the industry magazine is as threatening to your business as an "at home" spread in *Hello!* is to celebrity marriages.

McDonald's was this week announced as *Campaign*'s 1998 Advertiser of the Year, in recognition of its sophisticated approach to branding and promotions, and the huge improvement in the quality of its UK ads since the days of Ronald McDonald. The burger giant has managed to turn successive short-term price promotions into an ongoing brand campaign. It also won last year's World Cup advertising battle, and consistently outsmarted Burger King.

Others now similarly cursed include BMP DDB, New PHD and the Volkswagen Polo — voted Agency of the Year, Media Agency of the Year, and Campaign of the Year respectively.

● *Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of* Campaign

'I have the power'

Saatchi & Saatchi's new boy has big ideas, says Michele Martin

SIMON BROOKE-WEBB



The adman cometh: David Droga, the new executive creative director of Saatchi & Saatchi

Dave Droga is remarkably chipper considering the kind of few weeks he has had. Before Christmas he moved from Singapore to London, took up one of the biggest jobs in British advertising at the age of 30, and dealt with a dollop of office politics to boot.

The position is executive creative director of Saatchi & Saatchi, one of the world's most famous ad agencies, while the office politics came courtesy of some of the people he has to oversee. One of Saatchi's existing joint executive creative directors, Adam Kean, is now leaving the agency, although he will continue to work on individual projects.

the media interview

The fact that Saatchi's is prepared to lose one of its most senior staff — Kean came 176th in *The Observer's* list of the UK's 300 most important people — says a lot about the importance the company places on Droga.

Although the youngest creative director in London and the only non-Brit running such a big department, he is a realist. "*If things were perfect here*, they wouldn't have brought me in to change things," he says. "And you won't meet anyone more competitive than me. I was one of five boys in my family, so I know what you need to do to make noise and grab attention."

After nearly four years stabilising the business since the departure of the founding Saatchi brothers, the agency feels it is time to stick its head above the parapet. The story of what has happened since Charles and Maurice left, taking seven senior managers with them, is not one of business failure — in financial terms, the company has done better than most people predicted. In 1997, billings were back at 1995 levels of £260 million after a 14 per cent fall.

But 1998 was not perfect — despite gains, there have been account losses, from Procter & Gamble's £75 million media buying to the National Lottery's £17 million business and the £8 million European Schweppes business.

The main weakness has been creative. In its heyday, Saatchi's persuaded beer drinkers that "Australians wouldn't give a XXXX" for anything but Castlemaine, and helped to elect the Tories in 1979 with posters saying: "Labour isn't working."

Today, too few of its ads are memorable. And some, such as the Visa ads, with Mel Smith "making cash a Kerrching of the past", have been the butt of jokes. Industry insiders say Saatchi's has missed having *a proper creative figure*head since Charles Saatchi left.

Enter Droga, the man expected to fill that role. Small, dark and charismatic, the new kid on the block has a track record which indicates that he may be able to inject some pizzazz. He joins from Saatchi's office in Singapore, where he was regional creative director in Asia. He is credited with turning it into a hotshop which won *Advertising Age's* Agency of the Year award in 1998. It also increased its billings by 45 per cent under him, despite the region's economic slump.

Droga describes his style of advertising as "looking for the simple, big idea" and says: "I'm here to push us further than we've ever been."

He stops short of saying that there will be redundancies, but admits that half of the creative department changed during his time in Singapore. Droga adds: "There will be a period *of three to six months* where I'll be reviewing things. I'll give everyone a chance to perform but if they don't, I'll bring in new people."

He will need every ounce of his bullishness. So far, the agency's lost clients have been balanced by wins that have included the £19 million Lloyds TSB business and work from existing clients. Such gains have helped to keep Saatchi's creative reputation in the City at a higher level than it is in adland, even though its share price fell from a high of £1.85 this year to about £1.32 now. Paul Richards, an analyst with WestLB Panmure, explains: "Saatchi's still has a reputation for creativity, but it's not the hotshop it once was."

Droga was born in Thredbo, an Australian ski resort in New South Wales, and his decision to go into advertising went against the family tradition of Cambridge followed by *jobs in "things* like finance". On hearing his decision, his enraged father said: "Son, you have really blown it this time."

He quickly proved his father wrong. In 1992, aged just 23, he was given a 25 per cent stake in one of Australia's trendiest agencies, OMON, after he helped to make it the country's fastest-growing shop. He sold his share three years later after "getting restless" and took the job in Singapore. *In between, he has man*aged to pursue his passion for skiing and to marry an American former ballerina.

On arriving in Singapore, Droga moved Saatchi's out of the skyscraper it inhabited and relocated to a converted music club. His ads are similarly unconventional. One, for hair dye, had a woman looking as if she was slitting her wrists. On closer inspection, the "blood" turned out to be colorant. Droga's reasoning was that women change their hair when they are unhappy. The ad hugely increased sales.

Significantly, his remit stretches beyond the creative department into account management and planning. "My loyalty is to the creative product but if that's being pulled apart from outside sources, I'll address that. I have a mandate, and with a mandate comes power," he says.

Hit them hard and hit them often

Raymond Snoddy

The ITV companies may have struck it rich already with Chris Tarrant's *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* but even more significant financial news is on the way for them. Research about to be published takes us closer than ever before to the holy grail of the advertising and marketing world — the knowledge of how television ads drive consumer purchases.

The findings by tvSPAN, a joint venture between the market research group Taylor Nelson Sofres and the sales house TSMS, demonstrates that advertising in the ITV peak-time schedule is at least four times as effective in driving sales of supermarket goods as the average performance of all television ads. The research also challenges the conventional view that the best way to develop such brands is to drip-feed ads, say once a week, during a campaign.

This is the approach of the advertising guru John Philip Jones of Syracuse University, the author of *When Ads Work*, who virtually adopted "once is enough" as his industry catchphrase.

Instead, according to Sue Moseley, TSMS's strategic planning director, the message should be to "tell them once, then tell them again quickly". To get consumers buying your brands, you have to zap them with several sightings of your ad, ideally the day before they go to the supermarket. If people see *an ad three times on the day before they* shop, there is a 50 per cent increase in sales.

This implies that, despite the fragmentation of audiences in the digital world, and *even if ITV fails to meet its target of 40 per* cent of peak-time viewing by 2000, ITV companies will continue to rake in money. Advertisers, if they believe the research, will have to fight their way into the ITV prime-time slots — and greater frequency will cost them.

A suspicious mind will note, of course, that TSMS is a company that sells ITV airtime and is also a subsidiary of United News and Media, holder of three ITV franchises. But Taylor Nelson Sofres is there to see fair play, and Andrew Roberts, its technical director, says that he has no axe to grind.

The research is powerful because it links purchasing directly with programming. The bar codes of all supermarket purchases by 10,000 families are fed into a database. In the Meridian ITV area, meters have been attached to all the television sets in 750 homes to monitor which channels they are tuned to.

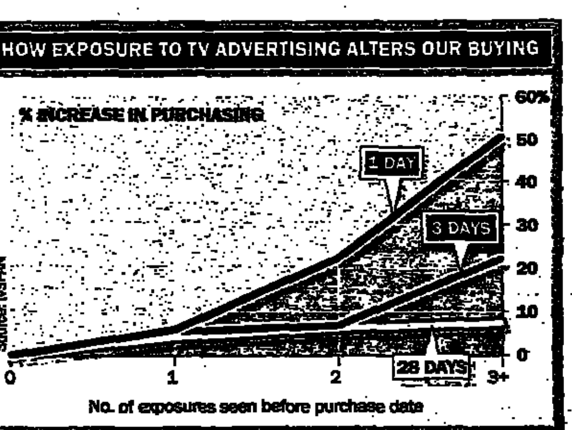
After two years, tvSPAN has amassed a great deal of data and is increasingly confident in its predictions, which fit neatly with research on memory and message retention.

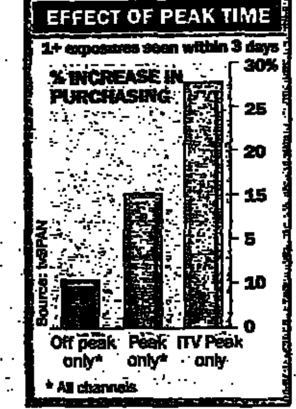
Reinforcement of an advertising message within a relatively short time also seems to improve longer-term response. Three exposures to an ad in one day still have double the effect on sales over a month than do three sightings over the whole four weeks.

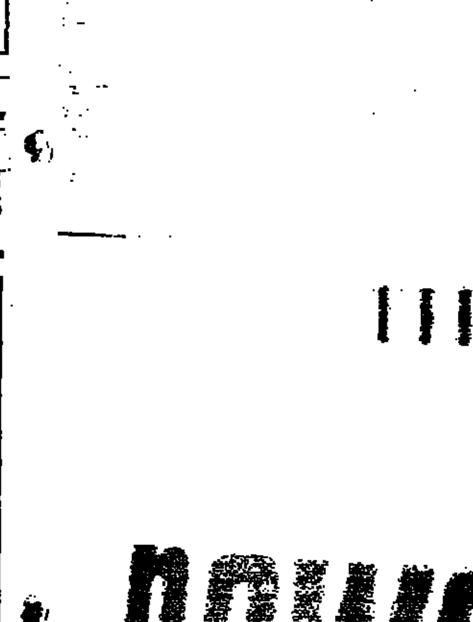
The power of concentrated exposure to ads seems to be greatest when those ads are shown at peak times on ITV. Several previous studies have proved the link between awareness of advertising and attention paid to programmes. If a viewer is interested in a programme, he or she is more likely to have noticed and absorbed an accompanying ad.

The tvSPAN team believes it has confirmed this link through ITV's ability to generate more sales at peak times. This works well with grocery sales because women tend to pay more attention than men to soaps, dramas and popular documentaries.

Now media planners in ad agencies will have to look at how a campaign is progressing at two or three-day intervals rather than waiting until it has ended. The research also calls into question such simplistic advertising measures as cost-per-thousand. And it should mean trebles all round for ITV in 1999.







Valuation time runs from exchange

Byrne and Another v Hall Pain & Foster (a Firm) and *Another*

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Schiemann

[Judgment December 11]

The date of accrual of the cause of action in a claim for damages for professional negligence brought by a purchaser of property against a firm of valuers, for the purposes of the Limitation Act 1980, was the date when contracts were exchanged.

The Court of Appeal so stated dismissing an appeal by *the plaintiff* purchasers, Marvin Byrne and Joanne Elizabeth Byrne, from the decision of Mr Justice Laws dated *April 7, 1998 whereby he struck out* their claim for damages for professional negligence against the defendant firm of valuers, Hall Pain & Foster, on the ground that the claim was statute-barred under section 2 of the 1980 Act. The writ was issued more than six years after contracts were exchanged but less than six years after completion.

It was alleged that the purchasers had exchanged contracts on a flat in Portsmouth relying on a valuation report written by the second defendant, a chartered surveyor employed by the first defendant firm. The report had been commissioned from the firm by the building society from whom the purchasers were *taking a mortgage*. After completion, defects came to light which the purchasers alleged should have been described in the report but were not.

Mr Paul McCormick for the purchasers; Mr Andrew Parsons for the valuers.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that the question raised was whether the cause of action accrued when contracts were exchanged or when the purchase was completed. *It was surprising* that the point had not previously been decided. While both sides could point to various dicta suggesting one conclusion rather than the other, neither could point to a case where the distinction between exchange and completion was, as in the present case, decisive.

It was suggested that two decisions of the House of Lords contained *important conflicting dicta* on the point.

First, *Smith v Bush* ([1990] AC 831) which was the case which established the potential liability in tort of the mortgagees' valuers to the purchaser, the foundation of the plaintiffs' claim in the present action, and, Mr Parsons submitted, Lord Templeman (at p852) could be seen pointing to exchange rather than completion as the stage when the cause of action arose.

Not so, Mr McCormick argued: Lord Templeman was there using *the term "contracts to buy" as an* omnibus expression encompassing either exchange or completion. It mattered not which it was: what *mattered was that a duty of care* should be held to exist because of the purchaser's likely reliance on the mortgage lenders' valuation.

His Lordship accepted Mr McCormick's submission. Essentially the case was concerned with the duty of care rather than damage. It was not directed to the question of when, as between exchange and completion, damage was first sustained.

The second House of Lords decision was the authority on which Mr McCormick principally relied, *Nykredit plc v Edward Erdman Ltd* ([1997] 1 WLR 1627), and in particular the speech of Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead at p1630.

There, Mr McCormick submitted: Lord Nicholls was addressing *the question as to when damage* was first sustained by a purchaser so that his cause of action in tort accrued against the negligent valuer, and his answer was "when he completes the purchase", which was when he "suffers actual damage by parting with his money".

That was the high-water mark of the plaintiffs' argument. Completion rather than exchange was *the concept three times referred to* by Lord Nicholls at that passage.

In his Lordship's judgment, the argument failed. For the purposes of Lord Nicholls' illustration in *Nykredit* it mattered not whether time ran from completion or exchange.

The issue in *Nykredit* was when the plaintiff bank's cause of action had arisen, and the decision was *that it arose when a relevant and* measurable loss had first been revealed. There, since the borrower had defaulted at once and the *amount lent had at all times exceeded* the value of the property, that had been at or about the time of the loan transaction.

The critical point to note, however, was that the action there was by a lender complaining that in reliance on the defendant's negligence he had made a bad loan, whereas the present action was by a purchaser the essence of whose complaint was that he bought a bad property.

Because it was altogether less certain whether and when loss *would be suffered by badly advised* lenders than in the case of badly advised purchasers, the cases were treated differently.

The central point which *his Lordship* apprehended was being made in Lord Nicholls' illustration of the house purchaser in *Nykredit* was that the purchaser was on any view damaged by purchasing in reliance upon a *negligent overvaluation*. But for that he would not have bought. No more would he have exchanged contracts to buy: he suffered actual damage by parting with his money and receiving in exchange property worth less than the price he paid.

But his Lordship could see no distinction in principle between parting with his money and receiving *in exchange property at completion* and, as would generally occur on exchange, paying a deposit and becoming committed to pay the balance on completion.

True, it was not until completion that *the* purchaser received the property in the sense of the legal estate in the property. On exchange, however, he obtained a very real interest in the property and, for example, had to insure it.

In the last analysis *Nykredit*, to his Lordship's mind assisted the defendants' argument rather than *the plaintiffs'. One looked, there*fore, for any detriment, liability or loss including liabilities which might arise on a contingency and *losses incurred from onerous provi*sions or covenants in leases subject only to the loss being a relevant loss, that is, one falling within the measure of damage applicable to the wrong in question.

In the present case, his Lordship repeated, *the plaintiffs* on exchange became irrevocably committed to acquiring the lease, a lease worth less than they reasonably believed, *and one which they* would not have committed themselves to acquire but for the defendants' negligent report.

That, as it seemed to *his Lordship*, plainly resulted in actual, as opposed to potential or prospective loss or damage of a kind recognised by the law. In his Lordship's judgment, it was no answer to say that *not every exchange resulted in* completion so that the plaintiffs might perhaps, in the event, have escaped from their commitment *without loss*.

The fact was that they did not do so and there was no reason to suppose that they would.

Nor did it seem to his Lordship any answer to say that property prices could have increased between *exchange and completion* sufficiently to outweigh the depreciating effect of the unrevealed defects.

Mr McCormick submitted that the loss crystallised only at completion and it was the market value of the property at that date that one must compare with the price paid. His Lordship saw no good reason why. By the same token that he would ignore any *movement* in the property market after completion, his Lordship would ignore it after exchange.

The valuation in the report would necessarily relate more closely to that of the property at exchange than at completion. By exchange, *the* purchase price would be fixed and agreed and by his commitment to the transaction at exchange the purchaser would effectively *have locked himself into the* property market at that point.

For the reasons given, which in substance were the same as those given by the judge below, his Lordship too would hold that the cause of action in cases like the present accrued when contracts were exchanged.

Lord Justice Otton gave a concurring judgment and Lord Justice *Schiemann agreed with both*.

Solicitors: Anderton & Co, Portsmouth; Grindeys, Stoke-on-Trent.

State benefits should be disregarded

Wadey v Surrey County Council

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown, Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Schiemann

[Judgment December 11]

When calculating interest on a plaintiff's damages for past losses in a personal injuries claim, the court *should* disregard *state* benefits received by the plaintiff as a result of the accident.

The Court of Appeal so stated allowing a cross-appeal by the plaintiff, John Wadey, from the decision dated April 1, 1998 of Judge Simpson sitting at the Mayor's and City of London Court.

The judge had awarded him damages of £224,049.81 in respect *of personal injury, loss and damage* he suffered as a result of injuries sustained in the course of his employment with the defendants, *Surrey County Council*, as a firefighter. The main appeal, by the defendants, which sought to impugn the judge's finding on liability had been compromised.

Mr Edward Bishop for the defendants; Mr Charles Pugh for the *plaintiff*.

LORD JUSTICE OTTON said that the substantive issue arose on the cross-appeal as to whether or not interest on a plaintiff's damages for past losses in an action for personal injuries should be calculated after deduction of all or some of the state benefits received by the plaintiff as a result of the accident.

That was an issue of considera*ble importance and arose out of the* Social Security (Recovery of Benefits) Act 1997.

Included in the award of £224,049.81 was the sum of £49,197.20, representing the benefits the plaintiff had received over a five-year period. In assessing the interest on special damages, of approximately £87,000, those benefits *were deducted before calculation*. Had they not been, the plaintiff's award would have been increased by nearly £10,000.

The question was whether the enactment of section 17 of the 1997 Act, and the repeal without replacement of section 103 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 meant that the law had now reverted to the common law position which would mean the deduction of benefits from the damages and interest calculation; or that it replicated the position of the Social Security *Act 1989, as variously* amended, of disregarding benefits for the purposes of damages but not interest; or whether the new leg*islation heralded a new approach* to the issue altogether.

To his Lordship's mind, the scheme of the 1997 Act was clear and straightforward and led to only one conclusion. Not only should benefits be disregarded from the assessment of damages, but also from the assessment of interest.

His Lordship had come to that conclusion primarily because of the absence of a provision similar to section 103 in the new Act, coupled with the enactment of section *17 with its unambiguous direction* as to the treatment of benefits in relation to damages.

The 1997 Act was not meant as a piecemeal *amendment* to the existing law, but was redrafted in its entirety, fitting with Parliament's intention of setting up a new scheme. The omission of a provision such as section 103 could not, therefore, have been unintentional.

If Parliament had wished to carry over the provision on interest from the earlier Act, it seems obvi*ous that they would have done so*. Yet they did not.

In coming to that conclusion his Lordship had drawn valuable assistance form the decision of the Inner House of the Court of Session: see *Wisely v John Fulton (Plumbers) Ltd* (1998 SLT 1026).

Their Lordships there had occasion to consider the exact same question which was now before the court, the Outer House having given conflicting answers to the question of whether benefits paid should be deducted from the assessment of interest.

In reaching his conclusion his Lordship had also taken into consideration the general principle that *on points of statutory construc*tion which extended to both countries.

English and Scots law should be *uniform, in order to avoid the* same Act giving rise to one result in Scotland and another in England. There was no compelling reason not to adopt *the Scottish decision* in what was a thoughtful and careful judgment and a sensible conclusion.

For those reasons his Lordship would hold that, in future, courts should disregard benefits received when calculating interest on a plaintiff's damages for past losses in personal injuries actions.

Lord Justice Simon Brown gave a *concurring judgment and Lord* Justice Schiemann agreed.

Solicitors: Vizards; Lawford & Co.

Will validly sealed after testator's death

In re Hughes, deceased

Before Judge Weeks, QC

[Judgment December 3]

Section 97(1)(c) of the Mental *Health Act 1983, which required a* statutory will to be sealed by the Court of Protection before probate could be granted, did not require the will to have been so sealed during the lifetime of the testator.

Judge Weeks, QC, sitting as an additional judge of the Chancery Division, so held allowing the appeal of Mr Frederick Hughes, the person entitled to benefit under a *statutory will executed on May 16*, 1997, from the refusal by Mr Registrar Yealdham of the Probate Registry of Wales on August 4, 1998 to admit to probate the said statutory will of Beatrice Maude Hughes, deceased.

Miss Sara Hargreaves for Mr Hughes; Mr Gilead Cooper for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and the Morriston Heart Research Fund, both entitled under the terms of the testator's previous will.

HIS LORDSHIP said that in 1981 the testator had made a will leaving her estate to her daughter with a gift over to the respondent charities. The testator's daughter predeceased her on May 3, 1995 after which the testator's mental health declined. Her son, Frederick Hughes, was appointed as her receiver pursuant to the terms of the 1983 Act.

On April 17, 1997 Mr Hughes applied to the Court of Protection for the execution of a statutory will in his favour, the draft of which was duly amended and approved by Master Prime.

A will in those terms was executed by Mr Hughes's solicitor and sent to the Court of Protection to be sealed on May 16, only to be returned to Mr Hughes's solicitor on *May 19 because the solicitor had* forgotten to sign the document certifying that the will was an extant copy of the *draft* settled and approved by the court.

On the same day the testator died. Unaware of the death of the testator the solicitors returned a certified copy of the statutory will to the Court of Protection on May 22, which was sealed by the Court *of Protection on May 27*.

The sole basis on which the deputy registrar refused to admit the statutory will to probate was that it had been sealed by the Court of Protection only after the testator had already died.

The deputy registrar's reasoning, based as it was on an analogy drawn from section 9 of the Wills Act 1837 was expressly disapplied by section *97(2)* of the 1983 Act.

His Lordship rejected Mr Cooper's alternative submission that the jurisdiction of the Court of Protection ceased on the death of the testator, and that sealing the statutory will on May 27 could not divest the *executors under the prior* will.

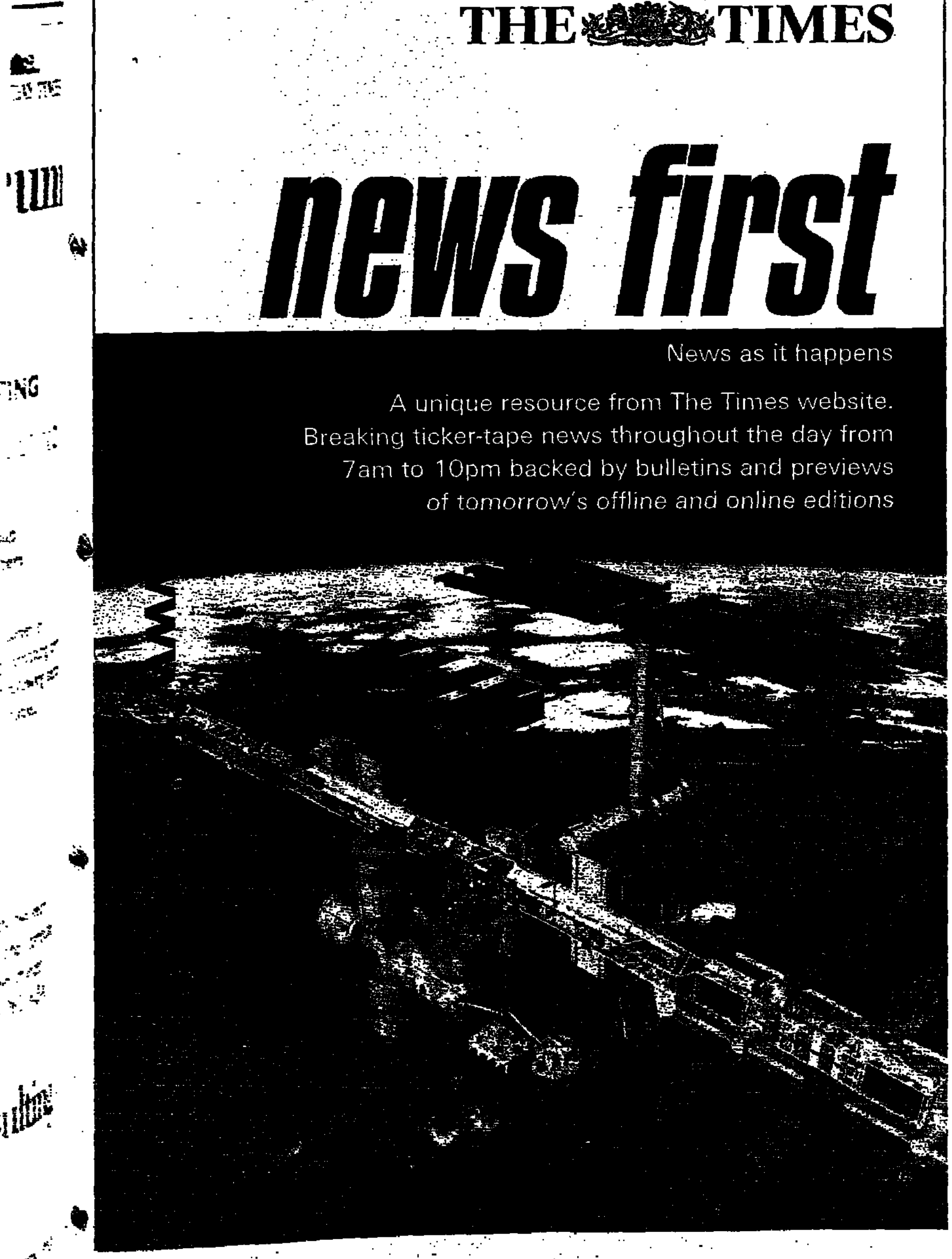
It was clear from rule 93 of the Court of Protection Rules (SI 1994 No 3046) that the purpose of sealing the statutory will was evidential.

It was not, as Mr Cooper had contended, analogous to a testator reading his own will before execution in order to check that it conformed to the draft, as at that stage *the testator was under no obligation* to execute the will in those terms.

In the case of a statutory will the Court of Protection had already decided on the contents of the will. In sealing, the Court of Protection performed the purely ministerial function of ensuring that the statutory will so executed conformed to its authorisation, and that could be *carried out equally* well *before* or after the death of the patient.

Section 97(1) of the 1983 Act laid down the formal requirements of a valid statutory will. There was no express requirement that the Court of Protection seal the will during the patient's lifetime and no sensible reason to imply any such arbitrary rule into the statute.

Solicitors: Peter Williams & Co, Swansea; Trevanions, *Poole* and Bevan Ashford, Cardiff.



No additive remedy after court hearing

Regina v Commissioner for Local Administration, Ex parte H (a Minor)

Before Mr Justice Turner

[Judgment December 21]

The Commissioner for Local Administration had no jurisdiction to investigate a complaint where the matter complained of had already been determined by the courts.

Mr Justice Turner so held in the Queen's Bench Division when dismissing an application for judicial review brought by H, a minor, by his mother and next friend, of the *decision of Mr Commissioner* White dated July 15, 1997 whereby he refused to investigate the applicant's complaint that Staffordshire County Council *had* failed to provide him with an appropriate education, seeking:

(i) an order of mandamus requiring the commissioner to investigate the applicant's complaint that the council had failed to provide *him with an appropriate education* between September 1994 and January 1997, and

(ii) declarations that where a complaint was made of maladministration in respect of which no remedy was available in judicial review proceedings, section 26(6)(c) of the Local Government Act 1974 provided no impediment to an investigation by the commissioner or, alternatively that the commissioner had a discretion to deal with complaints even where the subject matter of the complaint had been *raised in previous judicial review* proceedings.

Mr Richard Gordon, QC and Mr Ian Wise for H; Mr Brian Ash, QC and Mr John Hobson for the commissioner.

MR JUSTICE TURNER said that *in previous judicial review* proceedings in December 1996 Mr Justice Johnson had ordered that the applicant's special educational needs be assessed promptly by Staffordshire County Council and speedy consideration given to all *appropriate options for his future* education.

The present application, brought in August 1997, was, in essence an attempt to be compensated in respect of the maladministration which had led to the making of that December order.

The main thrust of the applicant's argument was that the commissioner had a discretion to deal *with the complaint because*, although the subject matter had been raised in other proceedings, the relief which could have been obtained in those proceedings had not included any remedy in respect of past maladministration and that therefore section 26(6) of the Local Government Act 1974 did not provide a bar to an investigation by the commissioner.

That subsection stated: "A local commissioner shall not conduct an investigation under this Part of the Act in respect of ... (c) any action in respect of which the person aggrieved has or had a remedy by way of proceedings in any court of law".

Dicta of Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls, in *R v Local Commissioner for Administration for the North and East Area of England, Ex parte Bradford Metropolitan City Council* ([1979] QB 287, 310) and of Lord Justice Woolf in *R v Commissioner for Local Administration, Ex parte Croydon London Borough Council* ([1989] 1 All ER 1033, 1038) were cited in support.

Rejecting the applicant's argument, his Lordship said that on the proper construction of section 26(6) of the Local Government Act 1974 the commissioner was not concerned with remedies but, as section 26(1) of the 1974 Act made plain, with "*action taken by a local* authority ... in exercise of its administrative functions".

Furthermore, both the *Bradford* and *Croydon* cases made it clear that the commissioner should not trespass on any area in which the courts had jurisdiction except in cases to which the section 26(6) proviso applied, namely:

"Provided that a local commis*sioner may conduct an investiga*tion notwithstanding the existence of a right or remedy if satisfied that in the particular circumstances it is not reasonable to expect the person aggrieved to resort or have resorted to it."

Finally, it was plain that the intention underlying the 1974 Act was to provide redress in respect of maladministration by a local au*thority in exercise of its administra*tive powers for those who were unable to get such redress in any other way.

The essential feature of the legislation was the creation of a legal right to complain about a griev*ance in respect of which there had* been no available form of redress whether through the common law or by means of judicial review.

Where a party had ventilated a grievance by means of judicial review it was not contemplated that they should enjoy an alternative, let alone an additive, right by way of complaint to a local government commissioner.

Solicitors: Coningsbys, Croydon; Pulvers, Watford.

Judicial review not available

Regina v Winchester Crown Court, Ex parte B (a Minor)

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown and Mr Justice Astill

[Judgment December 10]

Lifting reporting restrictions on naming a convicted criminal aged 14 was an exercise of the crown court's powers in relation to proceedings on indictment and accordingly there was no jurisdiction to entertain an application for judicial review of that decision.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held when dismissing an application by B, a minor aged 14, for judicial review of the decision of Judge Tucker, QC, to revoke the order that he had made to protect B's identity under section 39(1) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 after his conviction by a jury at Winchester Crown Court on June 16, 1998 for an offence contrary to *section 1 of the Criminal* Attempts Act 1981.

Mr Mark Kelly for B; Mr John Howell, QC, for the respondent.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that Judge Tucker having sentenced B to three years detention for a grave offence pursu*ant to section 53 of the 1933 Act*, took the view that open justice was absolutely essential to a civilised society and discharged the section 39 order prohibiting identification although he suspended the order until the disposal of B's appeal against sentence.

On appeal a two year supervision order was substituted and the Court of Appeal, which had earlier *constituted itself a divisional court*, granted leave to apply for judicial review of the discharging order.

While accepting that, in all the circumstances, the court *should* intervene to quash the discharging order, his Lordship said that the important question was whether, on the proper construction of section 29(3) of the Supreme Court Act 1981, the discharge of a section 39 order was an exercise by the crown court of its powers in relation to a trial on indictment and as such not subject to judicial review.

In R v Cardiff Crown Court, Ex parte M (a Minor) (The Times April 28, 1998), Mr Justice Sullivan, having given the fullest consideration to the authorities, conclud*ed that* a section 39 order was a general measure for the protection of young persons and that the power to make such an order was wholly collateral *to the trial on indictment*.

He was satisfied that none of the pointers identified in the following House of Lords decisions was met: the conduct of the trial was not affected, *In re Smalley* ([1985] AC 622); it was not an integral part of *the trial process. In re Sampson* ([1987] 1 WLR 194); nor did it arise in the issue between the Crown and the defendant, *R v Manchester Crown Court, Ex parte DPP* ([1993] 1 WLR 1524). Accordingly the decision of a trial judge to make or decline to make such an order was amenable to judicial review.

Furthermore, in *R v Lee* ([1993] 1 WLR 103) and *R v Leicester Crown Court, Ex parte S (a Minor)* ([1993] 1 WLR 111), both cases involving the discharge of a section 39 order, the Divisional Court had accepted *jurisdiction* to entertain a judicial review application.

However, none of that line of authorities including *Ex parte M* had considered the important case of *R v Central Criminal Court, Ex parte Crook (The Times* November 8, 1984) where the making of an order under section 11 of the *Contempt of Court Act 1981 prohibiting* the identification of a witness had been held to be within the meaning of section 29(3) of the 1981 Act as intending to influence the conduct of a trial on indictment and that therefore there was no jurisdiction for judicial review.

Rejecting the submission that orders pursuant to section 39 of the 1933 Act were a separate child protection power and not analogous to orders under section 11 of the 1981 Act, his Lordship said that in his view section 39 orders were inte*gral to the administration of justice* and not merely collateral to the proceedings so that section 29(3) of the Supreme Court Act 1981 deprived *the Divisional Court of jurisdic*tion.

Mr Justice Astill agreed.

Solicitors: Ranson Houghton, Andover; Treasury Solicitor.

Father wins order

In re K (Minor) (Residence order)

Where a mother was untrustworthy and there was a danger that if she was given leave to take her son aged two out of the country, the father would not be allowed to see *the child, it was appropriate for the* court to refuse her leave to take the child out of the jurisdiction and to order that the child reside with the father and that the mother have contact with the child.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hirst and Mr Justice Cazalet) so held on November 26 dismissing the appeal of the child's mother from an order of Judge O'Brien in Cambridge County Court on September 4, 1998 that the child reside with the father and have contact with the mother.

MR JUSTICE CAZALET said the parents were of Asian origin and had one son born in 1996.

For most of 1997 the child had lived in India with the mother's parents, who had refused to admit the father when he visited their house where the child was staying. *As a result the father* had brought wardship proceedings and the mother had brought the child back to England.

On the mother's application for a residence order and leave to remove the child from the jurisdic*tion, the judge had found her* "less then candid" and "perfectly capable of telling untruths".

He had found that the father had been endeavouring to see the child but had been prevented by the mother's family. The judge had taken the view that there was a question of trust involved.

It was not open to the court to say that the judge was wrong or *had not carried out the balancing* exercise properly.

Layout unhygienic

Oakley v Birmingham City Council

Justices were entitled to hold that the layout of premises as they would be used was so unhygienic as to constitute a statutory nuisance under section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Simon Brown and Mr Justice Astill) so held on December 18, dismissing Birmingham City Council's appeal by case stated from Birmingham Justices who, on April 24, 1998, found the council guilty of failing to abate a statutory nuisance at a council *house let to the complainant, John* Oakley, at 40 Hunslet Road, Quinton, Birmingham.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that the only lavatory was located in a compartment too small to contain a wash-hand *basin, so that anyone using it was* obliged, in order to wash his hands afterwards, either to use the kitchen sink or to pass through the kitchen and use a bathroom the other side.

Those premises were "in such a state as to be prejudicial to health" under section 79(1)(a) of the 1990 Act on the ground that the risk of cross-infection in the kitchen area was "injurious, or likely to cause injury, to health" within the meaning of section 79(7), and therefore con*stituted a statutory nuisance*.

The court was conscious of the wider implications of the finding, given that the council owned 20,000 similar properties built in 1939, and other authorities faced the same problem with their older housing stock.

But the layout of the premises, as they would predictably be used, was so unhygienic as to create precisely the class of risk of disease or illness to which section 79 was directed.

Address satisfactory

DPP v McCarthy

The purpose of the requirement in *section 170(2) of the Road Traffic* Act 1988 that a driver of a vehicle give his name and address was to enable reasonably swift and easy communication between the parties for the purposes of identification and accident negotiations.

Whether the address of a third party satisfied the purpose of the section was a question of fact.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Simon Brown and Mr Justice Astill) so held on December 14 when dismissing an *appeal by the prosecution* by way of case stated by Wood Green Crown Court (Judge J. Connor and two justices) on August 25, 1998, when it allowed the appeal of Kevin McCarthy having found that by providing the address of his solicitors he had satisfied the requirements of section 170(2).

MR JUSTICE ASTILL said that "address" was not defined in the section, no doubt because it was capable of attracting a number of epithets such as "home", "business", "residential" and so on.

An address was where a person could be addressed and the crown court had found, as a question of fact, that the respondent had satisfied the purposes of section 170(2) by giving the address of his solicitor.

His Lordship would not be inclined to change that decision.

CRICKET

Australia pair to be questioned on match-fixing claim

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN MELBOURNE

SHANE WARNE and Mark Waugh, the players implicated in the running story that has rocked Australian cricket, will be called as witnesses today at a public hearing in Melbourne. They will be questioned by an advocate acting on behalf of Salim Malik, the Pakistan batsman, who, they allege, offered them money to throw a match on a tour there five years ago.

It was revealed recently that the Australian pair received $11,000 from an Indian bookmaker for disclosing details of pitch conditions on a tour of Sri Lanka earlier that year. They confessed later to the Australian Cricket Board (ACB), which took the money out of their pay packets but which did not make the matter public until journalists pressed them on the matter last month, four years after the encounter with the bookmaker.

Warne and Waugh have vigorously protested their innocence about the more important question of alleged match-fixing and it is believed that there is no evidence to implicate them in anything more serious. It is widely felt that they behaved in a silly manner, were caught out and have paid the penalty for their folly — except on the sub-continent, of course, where people sense mischief.

How much will emerge from this hearing is hard to predict. The Pakistani judge who has presided over the investigation into alleged corruption in that country's cricket is ready to make his findings public and has informed Salim and Wasim Akram that they can expect to be implicated for their alleged involvement.

Salim is the key figure, since it was he who, Waugh and Warne allege, approached them in a Karachi hotel in October 1994 with the offer of money for throwing a Test match. Despite Salim and Wasim's protestations of innocence, Salim may find it difficult to clear his name when all details have emerged from the Pakistan inquiry.

To make things even more prickly, Wasim has accepted the captaincy of Pakistan until after the World Cup, which is staged in England later this year. Wasim stood down after leading Pakistan to a 3-0 series victory over West Indies in 1997, claiming that death threats against his family in Lahore had made him reconsider his position.

Now, after the failure of Aamir Sohail to impose any sort of order on a team known for its fickleness and the recent defeat at home by Zimbabwe, the lowliest Test nation, Wasim is back in the hot seat. It is the third time that he has captained Pakistan in his distinguished career and it is impossible to say, given the bizarre circumstances, that it will not be the last time that he does the job.

In a very public and deliberate act of goodwill, the ACB has appointed Warne as the captain of the Australia one-day side for the triangular series involving England and Sri Lanka, which begins in Brisbane on Sunday. Steve Waugh, the regular captain, will miss the first two games with a thigh strain.

There is so much going on at the moment, with the various sub-plots titillating almost as much as the main tale, that nobody is sure how it will all end. It is doing cricket no good at all, so, when the Australian pair step into the room today, it is in their interests, and the game's, to be frank.

Waugh and Warne have had a hard time of it of late, given a mixed reception by the Test crowds, who were not enormously impressed by their apparent lack of contrition, though both players have expressed their regret. It would be nice to move on, but one gets the impression that this story has developed a momentum that will take some stopping.

Stewart to return behind stumps

ALEC STEWART will return to wicketkeeping duties when he leads the England one-day team against Australia in the first match of the triangular series in Brisbane on Sunday.

Warren Hegg, of Lancashire, took over behind the stumps for the final two Ashes Tests as Stewart promoted himself to open the innings, but David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, is not concerned about Stewart combining the duties of wicketkeeper, specialist batsman and captain in one-day cricket.

"I don't envisage it being a problem," he said. "At Surrey, unless there are exceptional circumstances, he doesn't keep in four-day games but opens and keeps wicket in limited-overs. He doesn't mind."

However, Graveney said thatg Stewart would be left out of the England side to play Queensland in a day-night game today to give him time to rest. "With the intensity of the last two Test matches, he just needs a couple of days to refocus his mind," Graveney said.

He added that the switch from day cricket to playing under lights was unlikely to cause a problem for England, who are not as accustomed to day-night cricket as Australia. "Probably our players have less exposure to floodlit cricket than most," Graveney said. "We don't have the permanent structures Australia have. The concept of having huge floodlights at Lord's might make a few people shake, but I don't think that will be a disadvantage."

Here comes Mr Jordan, or does he?

NBA is banking on the return of its brightest star says **Tunku Varadarajan**

Hours after concluding a deal with the players' union of the National Basketball Association, David Stern, the NBA's abrasive commissioner, said to the television cameras: "Michael, if you're watching: please come back."

He was referring to Michael Jordan, the Chicago Bulls genius, who has had the game on tenterhooks since suggesting last July that the 1998 season would be his final one. His statements sprang mainly from disillusionment: the Bulls had dispensed with Phil Jackson, the coach, and Jordan said that he would play for no other. Then he appeared to soft-pedal, saying that he would wait until the end of the NBA dispute to make a decision.

That has now happened. With suitable drama, agreement was reached at 6am on Wednesday, in a 25th-floor conference room in Manhattan. Sitting amid the debris of several half-eaten pizzas, the players and owners decided — after more than six months of ill-tempered opposition — that there was too much to lose on both sides. If the NBA's season had evaporated, it would have been the first professional sports league to lose a full schedule to a labour dispute.

The general view is that the owners won the battle. The players/workers — whose average wage of $2.6 million makes them the highest-paid sportsmen in the world — were always the vulnerable party. The average wage is rather misleading, as it is bumped up by those who earn astronomical salaries: the median wage, a better reflection of most players' true worth, is a relatively modest $1.3 million.

There is no denying that the players have been hit. Their battle of attrition, in which they took the owners to the brink, has yielded remarkably poor dividends. There will be no more "$100 million" contracts. With the high-end salaries now-capped at $14 million — no other professional sport has a cap on individual salaries — the days of the gargantuan Kevin Garnett contract are over. Furthermore, players cannot opt out of contracts until after the fifth year and their teams still hold the right of first refusal after that fifth season. Under the old scheme, players could opt out after three years.

There are now heavy restrictions on free-agent re-signings and no more "grandfather clauses". Players like Karl Malone, of the Utah Jazz, who was expecting a $20 million-a-year deal by relying on a "carry-over" of the previous collective bargaining agreement, will not now be "grandfathered", to use the inelegant argot of the court. His new contract cannot start at more than $14 million for the first year. There are also new restrictions on player mobility. Previously, free agents could re-sign with their teams for one year and then be traded. Now, they must sign for a minimum of three years before being eligible for a trade.

Finally, there are new caps on annual salary increases. Players previously received a 20 per cent rise each year.


Jordan shows why he commands such a huge salary, during the NBA finals last year

> 'If this version serves as a template for a leaner league, some good will have come'

Under the new deal, this will be 12 per cent. The shortened season will begin early next month, with each team playing about 50 games instead of the usual 82. The regular season ends in late April, when the play-offs — their make-up is unaffected — begin.

The shorter season, ironically, may prove to be better. The NBA schedule is bloated and farcical. In a normal season, only a handful of teams are eliminated before the play-offs — after nearly six months of basketball. If this year's version serves as a template for a leaner NBA league, some real good will have come from the dispute.

For their part, the fans are dusting off those season tickets and asking the sort of question that fans are entitled to ask. As *The New York Times* queried on its front page yesterday: "Will he be back?" Will Jordan return and lead the Bulls to their fourth consecutive NBA title? Yesterday, David Falk, his agent, said: "Michael is going to analyse the deal, see what Chicago wants to do and then make an informed decision. I'm not certain what his time-frame is."

Under the new agreement, Jordan will receive a 5 per cent rise on his salary last year of $33 million. However, since the season is reduced, he would take home only $18 million. Falk said: "He has to make whatever decision makes him happy and I'll support it."

The money is unlikely to be a big issue. *The Daily News* of New York, quoting sources close to the player, said that he is more receptive to the idea of a 45-50 game season than to the grind of an 82-game schedule.

However, the real clincher could be the "value added" to his endorsements — both present and future — from a final appearance on court. If he does play, prepare for him to be cast as a saviour by the media. Then, sit back and hear the cash registers tinkle.

BOWLS: CHAMPIONS EDGE HOME AFTER ANOTHER MARATHON CONTEST

Corsie stays the course into final

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

RICHARD CORSIE and Graham Robertson, of Scotland, the champions, reached the final of the world indoor pairs championship at Potters Leisure Resort on the Norfolk coast yesterday when they defeated Gary Smith and Andy Thomson in a five-set marathon, 7-1, 5-7, 7-6, 3-7, 7-4.

The crowd at Potters are getting their money's worth. The last three quarter-finals on Wednesday all went to five sets and the afternoon session, which started at 2pm, took more than 11 hours to complete. Although it was 1.10am yesterday morning by the time that Steve Rees and John Price completed their 7-6, 3-7, 3-7, 7-3, 7-5 victory over Tony Allcock and Mervyn King, there were still 60 brave souls sitting in the gallery — and, no, they were not asleep.

The first of the semi-finals — a repeat of the final last year — saw the initiative change hands time and time again. When the Scots won the first set at a canter and galloped into a 5-2 lead in the second, a straight-sets victory seemed to be on the cards, but the English pair somehow managed to steal the second set. "From then on, it was anybody's game," Thomson said. "Gary played superbly in the second half, but Richard is in good form and did a lot of damage."

Smith was disappointed that he has failed to earn a place in the English international trials, which take place at Bournemouth this weekend. "How can they say someone who is provisionally ranked No 9 in the world is not in the top 68 in England?" he asked.

Smith and Thomson led 3-1 in the decider, but dropped a single and a disastrous four to trail 3-6. However, Thomson had a chance of claiming a count on the next end, but narrowly missed with an attempt to move the jack and had to settle for a single.

Corsie drew the winner on the next end, but left it almost a foot away from the jack, giving Thomson just enough room to slide through the gap between wood and jack with the last bowl of the game.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Begin Bridge with *The Times*: Lesson 38 – No-Trump Responses

Last week I looked at responses of One of a Suit, but sometimes you don't have a four-card major to bid at the one level and must look for an alternative. A One No-Trump response shows 6-9 HCP and denies an intervening major suit of four cards or more.

Here are some examples of a One No-Trump response to a One Heart opening:

(A)		(B)		(C)	
♠	Q 10 3	♠	6 5	♠	K J 5
♡	7 6 2	♡	6 2	♡	3
◇	A Q 5	◇	Q 9 8 6 3	◇	Q J 7 4 3
♣	9 8 5 4	♣	A 10 5 4	♣	J 10 8 7

Hand (A) is a perfect One No-Trump response, completely balanced with 8 HCP. If partner rebids in a suit to show an unbalanced hand you will know he has five or more hearts and that you have at least an eight-card fit there.

Hand (B) is a minimum with 6 HCP. Don't worry that you have just two little spades. A One No-Trump response doesn't promise stoppers in all the other suits.

Hand (C) is a maximum. Don't worry about holding a singleton heart. A One No-Trump response doesn't promise a balanced hand.

What would you bid on the following hands after the One Heart opening?

(D)		(E)		(F)	
♠	K J 4	♠	A Q 6 5	♠	K J 5
♡	8 7 4	♡	8 7 2	♡	Q 10 4
◇	A J 10 5	◇	Q 10 6	◇	A Q 8
♣	Q 10 6	♣	K 10 7	♣	Q 10 7 6

You will notice that all these hands are too strong for a One No-Trump response. With *Hand (D)* respond Two No-Trumps, showing 11-12 HCP and a balanced hand. This balanced hand should not contain a four-card spade suit though, so with *Hand (E)* you are better to start with One Spade. *Hand (F)* is stronger still. This time you cannot risk missing game with your 14 HCP, so you jump straight to Three No-Trumps.

All the three hands above contain three-card support for hearts. After these jump bids in no-trumps partner, with a five-card major, needs to know whether to choose his suit or no-trumps as the final denomination. He cannot do this very easily unless he knows how many hearts you have. It is best to have the agreement that these jumps show three-card support for hearts.

□You can get a copy of any lesson from this beginners' course by sending two 26p stamps per lesson (or five stamps per set of five) to Sally Brock, 73 Totteridge Lane, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 7QA. Don't forget to state which ones you want.



BY RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

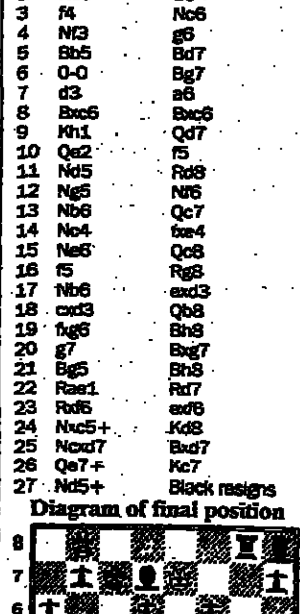
Sokolov wins

Ivan Sokolov has won the Hastings tournament with a round to spare, scoring an unassailable six points. With only one round remaining, none of his rivals has more than 4.5.

White: James Plaskett
Black: Sergei Shipov
Hastings Premier 1999
Sicilian Defence

1	e4	c5
2	Nc3	d6
3	f4	Nc6
4	Nf3	g6
5	Bb5	Bd7
6	0-0	Bg7
7	d3	a6
8	Bxc6	Bxc6
9	Kh1	Qd7
10	Qe2	f5
11	Nd5	Rd8
12	Ng5	Nf6
13	Nb6	Qc7
14	Nc4	fxe4
15	Ne6	Qc8
16	f5	Rg8
17	Nb6	exd3
18	cxd3	Qb8
19	fxg6	Bh8
20	g7	Bxg7
21	Bg5	Bh8
22	Rae1	Rd7
23	Rxf6	exf6
24	Nxc5+	Kd8
25	Ncxd7	Bxd7
26	Qe7+	Kc7
27	Nd5+	Black resigns

Diagram of final position



White: Jon Speelman
Black: Mikhail Saltaev
Hastings Premier 1999
Trompovsky Attack

1	d4	Nf6
2	Bg5	d5
3	e3	c5
4	Nc3	Nc6
5	a3	e6
6	Nf3	Qb6
7	dxc5	Bxc5
8	Bd3	Be7
9	h3	0-0
10	0-0	Rd8
11	Qe2	g6
12	Rfd1	Bd7
13	Rab1	Be8
14	e4	dxe4
15	Nxe4	Nxe4
16	Qxe4	Bxg5
17	Nxg5	Qd4
18	c3	Qxe4
19	Bxe4	Rxd1+
20	Rxd1	Rd8
21	Rxd8	Nxd8
22	f4	f6
23	Nf3	Bc6
24	Bxc6	Nxc6
25	Kf2	Kf7
26	Ke3	Ke7
27	Nd4	Kd6
28	Nxc6	Kxc6
29	c4	Kc5
30	Kd3	h6
31	b4+	Kc6
32	Kd4	Kd6
33	c5+	Kc6
34	a4	Kc7
35	b5	Kd7
36	Ke4	Kc7
37	Kf3	a6
38	Ke4	axb5
39	axb5	Kd7
40	Kf3	Ke7
41	h4	h5
42	Ke4	Kd7
43	Kd4	Kc7
44	Kc4	Kd7
45	Kb4	Kc7
46	Ka5	Kc8
47	Kb6	e5
48	fxe5	fxe5
49	Ka5	Black resigns

Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from *Times* readers will be published either here or in the Saturday *Times* Weekend column.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

CATBAND
a. A group of pussies
b. A sort of bolt
c. An erotic dance

CREBROUS
a. Frequent
b. Clever
c. Obscure

CULLION
a. An oik
b. A kind of onion
c. A testicle

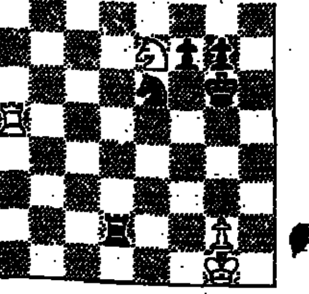
CATAPHRYGIAN
a. A defensive covering
b. An heretic
c. A verse metre

Answers on page 50

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This is from the 1988 Ubilava — Georgiev game. Black can win but must deal with White's check. However, 1 ... Kf6 allows 2 Ng8+ and Black must return to g6. To win Black had to try 1 ... Kh6 but played Kh7 and was shocked by the reply. What was it? Solution on page 50





RACING

Cheltenham lacks competitive bite

By Richard Evans
Racing Correspondent

A NEW catering awards scheme for Britain's 59 racetracks, which has the enthusiastic support of the British Horseracing Board (BHB) and Racecourse Association (RCA), is being snubbed by Cheltenham.

The home of jump racing is alone in its wish to take no part in the innovative project, which will be launched next week in an attempt to reward catering excellence and improve the public perception of food and drink on course.

Racecourse catering is one of most controversial issues among racegoers and has often been the butt of strong criticism. Although standards and value for money are acknowledged to have improved in recent years, public opinion lags behind the reality and a survey a year ago revealed that the issue remains a barrier stopping potential spectators going racing.

The awards scheme has been devised by Peter Steveney, a former Jockey Club stewards' secretary who now runs a racing promotion company, and has been welcomed by other racecourses. It will be similar in structure to the successful betting manager of the year awards scheme, which has been running for ten years and done much to improve the image of betting shops and their staff.

A panel of judges will receive racegoer comments and send catering experts to racecourses before announcing quarterly award winners and commendations as well as a catering award of the year.

Steveney explained: "Racecourse catering has improved a lot in recent years, but the public perception seems to lag behind it. We felt it would be useful to give racing and racecourses a platform where people can celebrate when the catering is very good."

Peter Savill, the BHB chairman, and Tristram Ricketts, the BHB chief executive, have expressly given their support to the project "as it rewards those racecourses who reach high standards in this important area of customer service". However, Steveney said that Edward Gillespie, managing director at Cheltenham, had poured cold water on the scheme because he did not want others judging Cheltenham's standards. "Funnily enough, a few days later there was a letter in the racing press castigating Cheltenham for the cost of its sandwiches."

Cheltenham's reservations were shared initially by Ascot, which was concerned about the criteria being used for the awards scheme, but it has agreed to take part.

Gillespie yesterday described the awards scheme as a "management distraction". He added: "These things have to be kept in perpective. What proportion of our time and energy and that of our customers is spent on catering as opposed to betting, viewing or lavatories? Perhaps we should have awards for those as well. It doesn't mean we are ashamed of what we do. Far from it, but we are trying to concentrate on many parts of running a racecourse."

There is a 7.30am inspection at Towcester to determine whether today's card can take place. "We were racecable today so we are hopeful," Hugo Bevan, the clerk of the course, said. "I would say we had a 60-40 chance of going ahead."

Officials at Haydock inspect at 7.45am today for tomorrow's fixture. Unless conditions improve, the meeting will be in jeopardy.

Johnson receives same ban as McCoy

BY CHRIS McGRATH

RICHARD JOHNSON, perhaps the rival least embarrassed by the best of Tony McCoy, was yesterday deemed a match for the champion's recent worst as well.

Johnson, who closed the gap at the top of the table when McCoy served an identical sentence in November, received an 18-day ban as punishment for his own excesses with the whip. Four of those days are suspended for six months, but equally Johnson must follow the humbled McCoy to a day at the British Racing School.



Johnson: lengthy ban

Johnson was referred to the Jockey Club after exciting the attention of the Cheltenham stewards with his riding of Jathib on New Year's Day. The jockey conceded himself guilty of using his whip with excessive frequency after watching the video with the disciplinary committee, which suspended him from Tuesday until January 27.

"Hopefully I can get my use of the whip down and never come back here again," he said. "I want to ride as many winners as possible for owners, trainers and the public, but the line has to be drawn somewhere and unfortunately I crossed it. When I saw the race I knew I had broken the rules, but it's easier to see that watching TV than when you are riding a horse."

Teeton Mill raises profile

POINT-TO-POINT BY CARL EVANS

POINT-TO-POINT racing launches itself back onto the national sporting scene this weekend amid a wave of optimism and confidence. The first of 206 meetings takes place at Cottenham in Cambridge on Sunday and, with good old-fashioned, wet jumping ground now prevalent across the country, racing can proceed with the aim of giving fun.

Pointing began as a lark among hunting folk and it still offers that sort of atmosphere. It is a friendly sport, cheap to watch at the vast majority of courses, an excellent day out for all ages and, because of the multitude and spread of venues, often only a short drive away.

It often takes star performances to bring attention to a minority sport and what Steve Redgrave has done for rowing, Teeton Mill and Cool Dawn are doing for British point-to-pointing. Their dominance of feature races in 1998 has been a real talking point. Pointers have made the transition to professional jump racing before and horses like What A Myth and The Dikler went on to win the Cheltenham Gold Cup, but pointing was a parochial affair then.

If a hunting yard had ten thoroughbreds capable of racing it was rare, but even small livery yards now boast that number and the champion of the sport, Dorset-based Richard Barber, trains 40. Teeton Mill's former trainer, Caroline Bailey, is preparing a string of about 25 in Northamptonshire, while Sheila Crow and Heather Dalton have similar numbers in their Shropshire yards.

Barber is the best known of these four since he now regularly wins a race at the Cheltenham Festival — Earthmover's victory in the Foxhunters' was Barber's fourth, yet his main aim is to educate young horses before sending the good ones to Paul Nicholls for a career under Rules.

The formula has worked so well that licensed trainers and their owners consider pointing a worthy source of material. There is a danger that the sport's image alters and dissuades real amateurs.

The recession in farming, tough as it is for many in the sport, has not, as yet, caused a drop in the number of horses and joint-champion rider, Andrew Dalton, a farmer himself, says one reason his wife's string has increased is because "there is no money in cattle so we thought we might as well get some more horses involved."

Julian Pritchard, who shared the championship with Dalton last season, is busy lambing. Such toil keeps him fit, and this tough and talented rider is bound to ride his share of winners, but Tim Mitchell, 30, Barber's stable jockey, is favourite to win the title for the first time.

Mitchell is in the enviable position, now Joe Tizzard has turned professional, of picking up the ride on Moving Earth, who, although only six, looked very special last season.

Meanwhile, the battle to be the woman champion seems to centre on Pip Jones — who took the title to Wales for the first time last season — and the rival she deposed, Shirley Vickery. Last Option and Coole Abbey could become stars of the hunter chase scene.

COMPREHENSIVE FIXTURE LIST FOR THE 1999 SEASON

JANUARY

10: **Cambridgeshire Harriers** at Cottenham.
16: **Army**, Larkhill, **Waveney Harriers**, Higham
17: **Thames Valley Club**, Tweseldown
23: **Cambridgeshire**, Horseheath, **Silverton** at Blackforest Lodge.
24: **PPORC**, Barbury Castle, **West Percy**, Alnwick
30: **Lincs Utd Club**, Market Rasen: **Royal Artillery**, Larkhill
31: **Suffolk**, Ampton

FEBRUARY

6: **Mid-Surrey**, Charing, **North Cornwall**, Wadebridge, **Oxford Univ Club**, Kingston Blount; **Vale Of Clettwr**, Erw Lon
7: **Cambs Univ Drag**, Cottenham, **Jedforest**, Friars Haugh, **Midlands Area**, Thorpe, **Old Raby Club**, Witton Castle
13: **East Cornwall**, Great Trethew, **Harkaway Club**, Chaddesley Corbett, **North Norfolk**, Higham
14: **Badsworth**, Wetherby; **College Valley & N Northumberland**, Alnwick, **Farmers Bloodhounds**, Heythrop; **Mid-Devon**, Blackforest Lodge; **South Dorset**, Milborne St Andrew, **Tweseldown Club**, Tweseldown
20: **Brocklesby**, Brocklesby Park, **Lanarks & Renfrew**, Lanark, **South Pool**, Buckfastleigh: **Thurlow**, Horseheath, **Tivyside**, Pantyderi, **United Services**, Larkhill
21: **Sinnington**, Duncombe Park; **South East Club**, Charing; **West Shropshire**, Weston Park.
27: **Chid, Lec & Cowdray**, Parham, **East Cornwall**, Lemalla; **Essex Farmers & Union**, Marks Tey; **Hursley Hambledon**, Badbury Rings, **North Hereford**, Whitwick, **South Durham**, Mordon.
28: **Berwickshire**, Friars Haugh; **Burton**, Market Rasen

MARCH

6: **Beaufort**, Didmarton, **Carmarthenshire**, Erw Lon; **Derwent**, Charm Park; **East Devon**, Ottery St Mary; **Easton Harriers**, Higham; **Flint & Denbigh**, Eaton Hall, **South Cornwall**, Gt Trethew, **Tynedale**, Corbridge
7: **Bicester & Whaddon**, Mollington, **Cottesmore**, Garthorpe, **South Hereford**, Garnons, **Staff College & RMA Draghounds**, Larkhill
13: **Avon Vale**, Barbury Castle, **Brecon & Talybont**, Llanfrynach; **Cumberland**, Dalston, **Dunston Harriers**, Ampton, **Holderness**, Dalton Park, **North Ledbury**, Upton-on-Severn, **Oakley**, Newton Bromswold, **Seavington**, Littlewindsor, **Tanatside**, Eyton-on-Severn, **Western**, Wadebridge, **West Street Tickham**, Detling
14: **Blankney**, Southwell, **South Devon**, Blackforest Lodge
20: **Bramham Moor**, Wetherby, **Cheshire**, Alpraham, **Llangibby**, Howick, **New Forest**, Larkhill, **Puckeridge**, Horseheath, **Quantock**, Cothelstone
21: **Dart Vale & Haldon**, Buckfastleigh, **Eglinton**, Lanark, **Hampshire**, Hackwood Park; **Meynell & South Staffs**, Sandon, **Pembrokeshire**, Lydstep, **Ross Harriers**, Garnons, **Southdown & Eridge**, Heathfield, **South Wold**, Brocklesby Park
27: **Clifton-On-Teme**, Upper Sapey, **Crawley & Horsham**, Parham, **Duke Of Buccleuch**, Friars Haugh, **Fitzwilliam**, Cottenham, **Hurworth**, Hutton Rudby, **Lamerton**, Kilworthy, **Mendip Farmers**, Ston Easton, **Monmouthshire**, Llanvapley, **Vale Of The White Horse**, Siddington, **Wilton**, Badbury Rings
28: **Belvoir**, Garthorpe, **Grafton**, Mollington, **Sir W W Wynn's**, Eaton Hall

APRIL

3: **Ashford Valley**, Charing; **Cattistock**, Littlewindsor, **Cleveland**, Stainton, **Curre**, Howick, **Essex**, High Easter, **Ledbury**, Maisemore Park, **Nth Staffs**, Sandon, **Percy**, Alnwick, **Spooners & West Dartmoor**, Cherrybrook, **Tedworth**, Barbury Castle, **United**, Brampton Bryan, **Vale Of Aylesbury**, Kimble, **Vale Of Lune**, Whittington, **Woodland Pytchley**, Dingley
5: **East Kent**, Aldington, **Eggesford**, Bishopsleigh, **Essex Farmers, & Union**, Marks Tey, **Four Burrow**, Trebudannon, **Morpeth**, Tranwell, **North Cotswold**, Paxford, **Old Berkshire**, Lockinge; **Southdown & Eridge**, Heathfield, **South Notts**, Thorpe, **South Pembrokeshire**, Lydstep, **South Shropshire**, Eyton-on-Severn, **Staintondale**, Charm Park, **Taunton Vale**, Kingston St Mary, **Vine & Craven**, Hackwood Park
6: **Croome & West Warks**, Upton-on-Severn, **High Peak**, Flagg Moor
10: **Essex & Suffolk**, Higham, **Glamorgan**, St Hilary
11: **Blackmore & Sparkford Vale**, Charlton Horethorne, **Cheshire Forest**, Tabley, **Cotswold**, Andoversford, **Dumfriesshire**, Lockerbie, **Ludlow**, Bitterley, **Middleton**, Whitwell-on-the-Hill, **Pytchley**, Guilsborough, **West Kent**, Penshurst
13: **Heythrop**, Heythrop
14: **Tiverton Foxhounds**, Stallenge Thorne
17: **Bedale & West of Yore**, Bedale; **Bicester & Whaddon**, Kingston Blount, **Braes of Derwent**, Corbridge, **Dartmoor**, Flete Pk, **East Essex**, Marks Tey, **Holcombe**, Whittington, **Pentyrch**, Bonvilston, **Portman**, Badbury Rings, **Worcestershire**, Chaddesley Corbett
18: **East Sussex & Romney Marsh**, Bexhill, **Quorn**, Garthorpe, **West Somerset**, Cothelstone
24: **Harstone**, Clifton-on-Dunsmore, **Cotswold Vale Farmers**, Maisemore Pk, **Fife**, Balcormo Mains, **Llangeinor**, Laleston, **Old Surrey & Burstow**, Penshurst, **South & West Wilts**, Larkhill, **Teme Valley**, Brampton Bryan, **Tiverton Stag**, Bratton Down, **York & Ainsty**, Easingwold
25: **Axe Vale**, Stafford Cross, **Grove & Rufford**, Southwell, **South Midlands Club**, Mollington, **West Norfolk**, Fakenham
30: **Cambs Univ Club**, Cottenham

MAY

1: **Albrighton**, Weston Park, **Berkeley**, Woodford, **Devon & Somerset Stag**, Holnicote, **Gelligaer Farmers**, Bonvilston, **Modbury Harriers**, Flete Park, **Pendle FOrest & Craven**, Gisburn, **Surrey Union**, Peper Harow
2: **Fernie**, Dingley, **Lauderdale**, Mosshouses, **Radnor & West Hereford**, Cursneh Hill
3: **Banwen Miners**, Pantyderi, **Cotley**, Cotley Farm, **Enfield Chace**, Northaw, **North Shropshire**, Eyton-on-Severn, **Stevenstone**, High Bickington, **Warwickshire**, Ashorne, **West Street-Tickham**, Aldington, **Zetland**, Witton Castle
8: **Bilsdale**, Easingwold, **Cumberland**, Aspatria, **East Anglian Bloodhounds**, Marks Tey; **Minehead & West Somerset**, Holnicote, **Vale Of Aylesbury**, Kingston Blount, **Ystrad Taf Fechan**, Bassaleg
9: **Llandeilo Farmers**, Erw Lon, **Ietcott**, Litton
12: **Weston & Banwell**, Cothelstone
15: **Dulverton West**, Bratton Down, **Golden Valley**, Bredwardine
16: **Border**, Corbridge Melton, **Garthorpe Wheatland**, Wolverhampton
22: **Dulverton East**, Mounsey Hill Gate, **Tredegar Farmers**, Bassaleg
23: **Haydon**, Hexham
29: **Exmoor**, Bratton Down.
30: **Berks & Bucks**, Kingston Blount, **Harborough Club**, Dingley
31: **Albrighton Woodland**, Chaddesley Corbett, **South Tetcott**, Litton

JUNE

5: **Torrington Farmers**, Umberleigh

LUDLOW

THUNDERER
1.00 STORMHILL STAG (nap). 1.30 Supreme Charm. 2.00 Welsh Mountain. 2.30 Wren Warbler. 3.00 Magnetic Reel. 3.30 Go Britannia. 4.00 Milady Ana.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (SOFT IN PLACES) SIS
TOTE JACKPOT MEETING

1.00 CLIVE PAVILION MAIDEN HURDLE
(£2,255: 2m 5f 110yd) (18 runners)

No	Form	Horse, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
101	50	BLACKOID 28 M Pipe 5-11-8	A P McCoy	—
102	30-0	BROGANIER 72 Mrs J Pitman 7-11-8	T J Murphy	—
103	45	BRUMALIS 35 S Brookshaw 7-11-8	C Maude	86
104	0-38	COUNTRY KRIS 9 B Ryall 7-11-8	B Fenton	71
105	0-	DASHARAN 391 I Williams 6-11-8	G Tormey	—
106	60-0	GOLD DROP 44 M Muggeridge 5-11-8	J Culloty	—
107		HENRY CANDO S Sherwood 5-11-8	G Bradley	—
108	2-43	MERRY PATH 21 O Sherwood 5-11-8	J Osborne	72
109	3	MITHAK 22 D Nicholson 5-11-8	R Johnson	77
110	20F3	PEEWIT BRIDGE 34 M Pipe 7-11-8	R Greene	36
111	2265	SOUTHERNDOWN 10 W Jenks 6-11-8	Gary Lyons	50
112	0	SPANDAU 28 O O'Neill 5-11-8	H Oliver (5)	—
113	-264	STORMHILL STAG 20 (BF,F,S) P Bowen 7-11-8	W Marston	[illegible]
114	U1-P	WINTER GAME 13 (F) H Daly 6-11-8	S Wynne	—
115	-000	CANDY COPPER 17 Mrs P Ford 6-11-3	Mr M Frith (7)	22
116	P	DAWN SPORT 216 A James 8-11-3	B Clifford	—
117	0-0	QUITE A LADY 23 J K Cresswell 6-11-3	R Farrant	—
118	-F04	THE BIG ROCKETTE 17 M Meagher 6-11-3	G McCormack (3)	—

[illegible]-4 Mithak, 4-1 Merry Path, 5-1 Stormhill Stag, 8-1 Blackoid, Peewit Bridge, 10-1 Henry Cando, 12-1 Brumalis, 14-1 others.

1.30 NEW YEAR NOVICES CHASE
(£2,866: 2m) (10)

No	Form	Horse, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
201	1-21	SUPREME CHARM 17 (CD,F,G,S) K Bailey 7-11-11	A P McCoy	95
202	54-P	ANOTHERONE TO NOTE 9 H Manners 8-11-5	Mr A Charles-Jones	—
203	1/2P	BLOWN WIND 27 (BF,D,F) O Sherwood 8-11-5	J Osborne	—
204	5-44	DOVETTO 7 (S) C J Price 10-11-5	T J Murphy	—
205	/0-P	ESKLEYBROOK 11 (B) M Jackson 6-11-5	S Wynne	—
206	4-PP	GENTRY 22 D McCain 8-11-5	A C Coyle (5)	—
207	53P2	HISAR 31 (D,G) P Ritchens 6-11-5	B Fenton	[illegible]
208	-425	SURSUM CORDA 20 (BF,D,S) H Daly 8-11-5	R Johnson	105
209	P	THE BIG YIN 96 J McConnochie 10-11-5	O Burrows (5)	—
210	P-0P	HOPPING MAD 20 (B) M Jackson 6-11-0	J Mogford (7)	—

2.00 LEINTWARDINE SELLING HURDLE
(£1,548: 2m) (11)

2.30 JANUARY NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE
(£2,450: 2m 4f) (16)



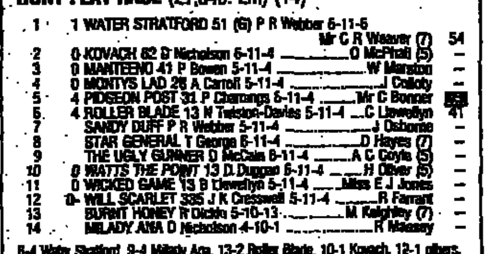
No	Form	Horse, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
401	34P-	DARK STRANGER 288 (S) M Pipe 8-11-13	A P McCoy	—
402	-U45	VIKING ROD 24 (G) M Williamson 7-11-2	C Maude	95
403	15-P	BURLINGTON SAM 29 (F,S) A Hobbs 11-11-2	Guy Lewis (3)	—
404	/6TF	CLOD HOPPER 20 (CD,F,S) I Williams 9-11-0	R Johnson	100
405	123U	COME ON PENNY 24 (F,G) D Gandolfo 8-10-13	S Wynne	107
406	5064	STORM TIGER 29 (G) S Mellor 8-10-8	C Webb	—
407	PF-P	WREN WARBLER 29 (S) Mrs P Robeson 9-10-8	M Richards	—
408	/53F	TOM PINCH 20 (G) G Balding 10-10-7	B Fenton	104
409	6445	WHITE DIAMOND 49 (F,S) P Pritchard 11-10-3	P Pritchard	[illegible]

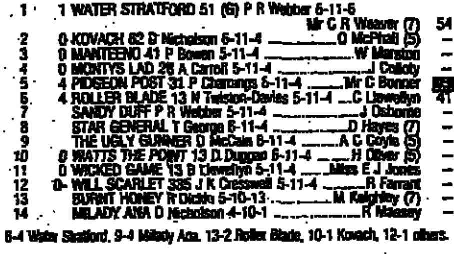
3.00 TENBURY HANDICAP CHASE
[TOTE TRIFECTA RACE] (£2,970: 3m) (14)





3.30 BUTTS NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,372: 2m) (14)





4.00 WIGMORE INTERMEDIATE OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE
(£1,546: 2m) (14)

SOUTHWELL

THUNDERER
12.40 Maftun. 1.10 Tragic Dancer. 1.40 Sue Me. 2.10 Tom Tun. 2.40 Sea Ya Maite. 3.10 Cyro. 3.40 Copper Shell.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE SIS

12.40 MARBLES HANDICAP
(Div I: £1,903: 2m) (10 runners)

1.10 HOOPLA MAIDEN STAKES
(£2,892: 1m 3f) (9)

1.40 CONKERS CLAIMING STAKES
(£2,087: 6f) (10)

2.10 LADBROKE ALL-WEATHER CHALLENGE SERIES (SHOWCASE HANDICAP)
(£3,713: 6f) (14)

2.40 HOPSCOTCH HANDICAP
(£3,729: 7f) (11)

3.10 JACKS SELLING STAKES
(3-Y-O: £1,814: 7f) (6)

3.40 MARBLES HANDICAP
(Div II: £1,893: 2m) (10)

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Market Rasen

Going: soft (heavy patches in straight)

1.10 (3m hdle) 1, **Riverbank Rose** (Michael Brennan, 8-1); 2, Plaid Maid (20-1); 3, Polar King (9-2 fav). 11 ran. 2l, 11l. W Clay. Tote: £10.70; £2.90, £5.20, £2.90. DF: £102.70. CSF: £133.16. Tricast: £733.58

1.40 (2m 3f 110yd hdle) 1, **Devonshire** (R Dunwoody, 8-11 fav); 2, Mapleton (5-1); 3, Grace Grey (11-2). 8 ran. 11l, nk. Miss Venetia Williams. Tote: £1.60; £1.10, £1.50, £1.40. DF: £2.40. CSF: £4.87.

2.10 (2m 1f 110yd hdle) 1, **Duke's Mount** (A Maguire, 9-2); 2, Warrin (13-2); 3, Manglieno (2-1 fav). 8 ran. Hd, 1l. D Nicholson. Tote: £4.70; £1.80, £1.90, £1.40. DF: £41.80. Trifecta: £188.50. CSF: £30.60. Tricast: £68.68

2.45 (3m hdle) 1, **Springfield Scally** (R Dunwoody, 100-30); 2, Sail On Sid (11-2); 3, Justice Alone (5-4 fav). 9 ran. 2l, 23l. S Gollings. Tote: £4.30; £1.30, £1.10, £1.10. DF: £9.70. CSF: £18.23.

3.15 (3m hdle) 1, **Jowoody** (G Lee, 7-1); 2, Zahaalie (8-1); 3, Five Flags (16-1). Grunge (6th) 7-2 fav. 11 ran. 3l, 8l. Mrs M Reveley. Tote: £6.90; £2.20, £3.30, £3.80. DF: £37.60. CSF: £57.84. Tricast: £798.84.

3.45 (1m 5f 110yd hdle) 1, **Always Wayward** (R Dunwoody, 11-2); 2, Fifteen Reds (4-1); 3, Ghost Moon (5-2 fav). 8 ran. 1¾, 8l. W Kemp. Tote: £10.50; £1.80, £1.70, £1.20. DF: £17.40. CSF: £28.69

Jackpot: not won (pool of £47,169.65 carried forward to Ludlow today).

Placepot: £39.80. Quadpot: £13.70.

Catterick

Going: soft (heavy in places)

12.30 (2m hdle) 1, **Uniform** (S Durack, 11-8 fav); 2, Dangerman (11-4); 3, Cadillac Jukebox (8-1). 18 ran. NR: Academy. 10l, 1¾l. Miss S Hall. Tote: £2.10; £1.10, £2.40, £3.60. DF: £3.50. CSF: £4.28.

1.00 (3m 1f 110yd ch) 1, **Scotton Green** (L Wyer, 10-11 fav); 2, Birkdale (11-10). Only two finished. 4 ran. Hd. T Easterby. Tote: £1.90. DF: £1.10. CSF: £2.09.

1.30 (2m hdle) 1, **Jago** (R Garritty, 10-1); 2, Monis (2-1 fav); 3, First Gold (13-2). 7 ran. 2l, 4l. M W Easterby. Tote: £7.60; £2.40, £1.60. DF: £5.70. CSF: £27.60

2.00 (2m ch) 1, **Ballesswhidden** (L Wyer, 6-4 fav); 2, Amlwch (5-2); 3, Biya (6-1). 6 ran. 2l, 13l. R Fahey. Tote: £2.50; £3.20, £1.10. DF: £2.00. CSF: £5.13.

2.35 (2m 3f hdle) 1, **Hunting Slane** (R Supple, 9-2); 2, Golden Thunderbolt (5-1); 3, Tanseeq (6-1). Crabbie's Pride 2-1 fav. 9 ran. Sh hd, 6l. C Grant. Tote: £4.30; £1.30, £1.90, £1.60. DF: £16.90. CSF: £24.24. Tricast: £121.45

3.05 (3m 1f 110yd ch) 1, **Galen** (Mr A Dempsey, 12-1); 2, Hopeful Lord (6-4 fav); 3, Flat Top (9-2). 11 ran. Sh hd, 15l. Mrs M Reveley. Tote: £13.30; £2.30, £1.10, £1.40. DF: £9.70. CSF: £28.61. Tricast: £89.35.

3.35 (2m flat) 1, **Barton Bill** (S Durack, 6-1); 2, Super Nomad (25-1); 3, Martha's Moonstone (50-1). Johnny Joe 6-4 fav. 12 ran. NR: Zeaman. 2l, 4l. J Mackie. Tote: £6.30; £2.20, £2.30, £15.00. DF: £31.90. CSF: £133.95.

Placepot: £12.00. Quadpot: £6.20.

Lingfield Park

Going: standard

12.50 (7f) 1, **Meadow Leader** (P Roberts, 11-2); 2, Frankie Fair (4-1 fav); 3, Dark Menace (16-1). 14 ran. NR: Friendly Brave, Wild City. Hd, 5l. C Dondi (Bel). Tote: £10.00; £2.30, £2.30, £4.80. DF: £21.80. CSF: £27.18

1.20 (5f) 1, **Krystal Max** (Kimberley Hart, 8-13 fav); 2, Anokato (7-4); 3, Dande Times (33-1). 4 ran. 3l, 1l. T Barron. Tote: £1.40. DF: £1.30. CSF: £1.74.

1.50 (1m 2f) 1, **Star Turn** (Dane O'Neill, 5-1); 2, The Green Grey (11-4 fav); 3, Priors Moor (16-1). 9 ran. 1l, ½l. R Flower. Tote: £10.30; £3.10, £2.10, £5.50. DF: £23.90. CSF: £18.86. Tricast: £195.70

2.25 (6f) 1, **Ajnad** (S Righton, 8-11 fav); 2, Wild Thing (7-1); 3, Admirals Place (12-1). 10 ran. 3l, 1½l. R Marvin. Tote: £1.40; £1.10, £4.20, £2.70. DF: £10.30. CSF: £5.81

2.55 (6f) 1, **Bartholomew** (T Sprake, 5-2 fav); 2, Sarah Teg (8-1); 3, Prince Prospect (13-2). 9 ran. Nk, ¾l. T Naughton. Tote: £3.10; £1.30, £2.70, £1.50. DF: £24.20. CSF: £16.51. Tricast: £90.72

3.25 (1m 5f) 1, **Noukari** (T G McLaughlin, 7-2); 2, Harvey White (2-1 fav); 3, Mystagogue (8-2). 8 ran. 4l, hd. P Evans. Tote: £5.10; £1.30, £1.50, £1.20. DF: £4.50. CSF: £9.75. Tricast: £27.29.

3.55 (1m 2f) 1, **Confronter** (P Doe, 4-1); 2, Holt Tide (7-4 fav); 3, Llanita (8-1). 8 ran. ½l, hd. S Dow. Tote: £5.10; £1.50, £1.10, £2.80. DF: £4.10. CSF: £11.08. Tricast: £38.93.

Placepot: £8.60. Quadpot: £5.40.

TOWCESTER

THUNDERER
12.50 Admiral's Guest
1.20 Annie Buckers
1.50 Stone's Throw
2.20 Boots Madden
2.50 Dmowski
3.20 Mr Jervis
3.50 Abalvino

Timekeeper's top rating: 1.20 SISTER GALE.

GOING: HEAVY (7.30AM INSPECTION) SIS

12.50 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION CONDITIONALS SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE
(£1,660: 2m 5f) (12 runners)

No	Form	Horse, owner, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
1	118P51	WEATHER WISE 13 (F,G,S) (D Chown) W G M Turner 7-12-0	J Power	84
2	40-003	FIVE FLAGS 1 (D,F,G,S) (K Middleton) Mrs S Smith 11-11-10	R Wilkinson	[illegible]
3	6136/P	ADIB 8 (S) (N Macon) N Macon 9-11-3	D Elsworth (7)	—
4	263-6P	SIX CLERKS 29 (S) (W Odell) Mrs S Odell 6-10-9	J Pritchard (7)	—
5	6-5001	SIMPLY 4 (F,G,S) (Mrs J Irvine) Miss Z Dawson 10-10-6 (7ex)	D O'Sullivan (5)	66
6	F0-320	ADMIRAL'S GUEST 6 (J Jardine) W Clay 7-10-4	R Widger	86
7	332315	BALMORAL PRINCESS 13 (BF,F,S) (Mrs S Mason) D McCain 6-10-0	S Durack	103
8	30460-	MILZIG 347 (F) (J Joseph) J Joseph 10-10-0	J Goldstein	—
9	4666	STALWART LEGION 28 (Royal British Legion Racing Club) J Hills 4-10-0	J Tizzard	50
10	000-6	JUST A ROADIE 22 (G Thorner) G Thorner 6-10-0	Clare Thorner (7)	42
11	6/0P05	CRAZY HORSE DANCER 24 (F,G,S) (Mrs A Roddis) F Jordan 11-10-0	L Aspell	38
12	1/P/50	CEANNAIRE 36 (B,G) (P Winkworth) P Winkworth 9-10-0	M Griffiths	—

Long handicap: Balmoral Princess 9-13, Milzig 9-11, Stalwart Legion 9-9, Just A Roadie 9-8, Crazy Horse Dancer 9-7, Ceannaire 9-3

BETTING: 3-1 Weather Wise, 9-2 Simply, 6-1 Balmoral Princess, 7-1 Five Flags, Admiral's Guest, 10-1 Six Clerks, Milzig, Stalwart Legion, 14-1 others.

1998: MEETING ABANDONED — COURSE WATERLOGGED



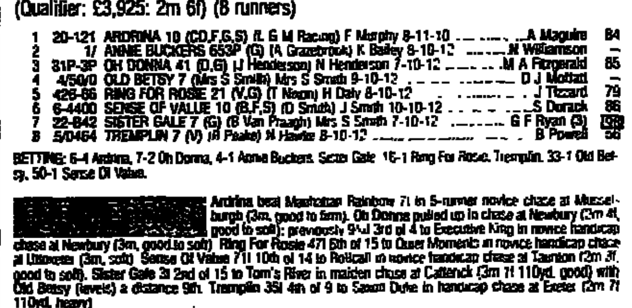
Weather Wise beat Western Chief 15l in 9-runner selling handicap hurdle at Hereford (3m 2f, good). Five Flags 3rd at Market Rasen (3.15) yesterday; previously 91l 15th of 17 to Tilly in handicap hurdle at Catterick (3m 1f 110yd, good). Adib pulled up in handicap hurdle at Catterick (3m 1f 110yd, good to soft). Six Clerks pulled up in novice handicap chase at Taunton (2m 3f, good to soft). Simply beat Dauphin Bleu 1¼l in 6-runner selling handicap hurdle at Folkestone (2m 6f 110yd, soft). Admiral's Guest 35l 7th of 10 to Prussia in selling hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, soft). Balmoral Princess 9¼l 5th of 10 to Oakbury in selling handicap hurdle at Market Rasen (2m 1f 110yd, soft). Milzig 52l 12th of 22 to Palace Parade in selling handicap hurdle at Windsor (2m 6f 110yd, good). Stalwart Legion 17l 6th of 18 to River Frontier in selling hurdle at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good). Just A Roadie 44l 6th of 10 to Amathomamones in selling handicap hurdle at Towcester (2m, soft). Crazy Horse Dancer a distance last of 5 to Studio Thirty in handicap hurdle at Hereford (2m 1f, good to soft).

WEATHER WISE goes well in this grade and can defy his big weight

1.20 TATTERSALLS (IRELAND) EBF MARES NOVICES CHASE
(Qualifier: £3,925: 2m 6f) (8 runners)

No	Form	Horse, owner, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
1	20-121	ARDRINA 10 (CD,F,G,S) (L G M Racing) F Murphy 8-11-10	A Maguire	84
2	1/	ANNIE BUCKERS 653P (G) (A Grazebrook) K Bailey 8-10-12	N Williamson	—
3	31P-3P	OH DONNA 41 (D,G) (J Henderson) N Henderson 7-10-12	M A Fitzgerald	85
4	4/50/0	OLD BETSY 7 (Mrs S Smith) Mrs S Smith 9-10-12	D J Moffatt	—
5	426-66	RING FOR ROSIE 21 (V,G) (T Nixon) H Daly 8-10-12	J Tizzard	79
6	6-4400	SENSE OF VALUE 10 (B,F,S) (D Smith) J Smith 10-10-12	S Durack	86
7	22-842	SISTER GALE 7 (G) (B Van Praagh) Mrs S Smith 7-10-12	G F Ryan (3)	[illegible]
8	5/0464	TREMPLIN 7 (V) (R Peake) N Hawke 8-10-12	B Powell	56

BETTING: 6-4 Ardrina, 7-2 Oh Donna, 4-1 Annie Buckers, Sister Gale, 16-1 Ring For Rosie, Tremplin, 33-1 Old Betsy, 50-1 Sense Of Value.



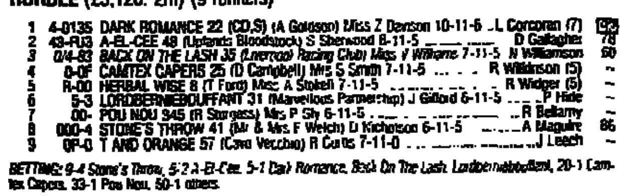
Ardrina beat Manhattan Rainbow 7l in 5-runner novice chase at Musselburgh (3m, good to firm). Oh Donna pulled up in chase at Newbury (2m 4f, good to soft); previously 9¼l 3rd of 4 to Executive King in novice handicap chase at Newbury (3m, good to soft). Ring For Rosie 47l 6th of 15 to Queer Moments in novice handicap chase at Uttoxeter (3m, soft). Sense Of Value 71l 10th of 14 to Rollcall in novice handicap chase at Taunton (2m 3f, good to soft). Sister Gale 3l 2nd of 15 to Tom's River in maiden chase at Catterick (3m 1f 110yd, good) with Old Betsy (levels) a distance 9th. Tremplin 35l 4th of 9 to Saxon Duke in handicap chase at Exeter (2m 7f 110yd, heavy)

ARDRINA has a clear opportunity to record her third chasing success

1.50 TOWCESTER FOR CONFERENCES NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE
(£3,120: 2m) (9 runners)

No	Form	Horse, owner, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
1	4-0135	DARK ROMANCE 22 (CD,S) (A Goldson) Miss Z Dawson 10-11-6	L Corcoran (7)	[illegible]
2	43-RU3	A-EL-CEE 48 (Uplands Bloodstock) S Sherwood 8-11-5	D Gallagher	78
3	0/4-63	BACK ON THE LASH 35 (Liverpool Racing Club) Miss V Williams 7-11-5	N Williamson	60
4	0-0F	CAMTEX CAPERS 25 (D Campbell) Mrs S Smith 7-11-5	R Wilkinson (5)	—
5	R-00	HERBAL WISE 8 (T Ford) Miss A Stokell 7-11-5	R Widger (5)	—
6	5-3	LORDBERNIEBOUFFANT 31 (Marvellous Partnership) J Gifford 6-11-5	P Hide	—
7	00-	POU NOU 345 (R Sturgess) Mrs P Sly 6-11-5	R Bellamy	—
8	000-4	STONE'S THROW 41 (Mr & Mrs F Welch) D Nicholson 6-11-5	A Maguire	86
9	0P-0	T AND ORANGE 57 (Cavo Vecchio) R Curtis 7-11-0	J Leech	—

BETTING: 9-4 Stone's Throw, 5-2 A-El-Cee, 5-1 Dark Romance, Back On The Lash, Lordberniebouffant, 20-1 Camtex Capers, 33-1 Pou Nou, 50-1 others.



Dark Romance 12l 5th of 13 to Ricardo in novice hurdle at Towcester (2m, soft). A-El-Cee 9¼l 3rd of 14 to No More Hassle in novice chase at Huntingdon (2m 4f 110yd, good). Back On The Lash 6l 3rd of 15 to Flamenco in novice hurdle at Hereford (2m 3f 110yd, good). Herbal Wise 47l 15th of 20 to Park Alert in national hunt flat race at Warwick (2m, soft); previously 76l last of 11 to No Quarter in national hunt flat race at Towcester (2m, soft). Lordberniebouffant 7¼l 3rd of 17 to Senesta in national hunt flat race at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, soft). Stone's Throw 21l 4th of 11 to Salamah in novice hurdle at Newbury (2m 110yd, soft). T And Orange 82l 8th of 9 to Mazileo in novice hurdle at Ludlow (2m, good).

STONE'S THROW can make the weight concession from Dark Romance tell

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
D Nicholson	26	65	40.0	D O'Sullivan	3	9	33.3
R Alner	5	13	38.5	N Williamson	15	46	32.6
R Curtis	7	22	31.8	A Maguire	19	61	31.1
Miss V Williams	9	30	30.0	R Dunwoody	7	31	22.6
Mrs P Sly	5	19	26.3	M Fitzgerald	12	57	21.1
K Bailey	12	46	26.1	R Guest	5	32	15.6
N Henderson	7	33	21.2	D Gallagher	7	49	14.3
J S Moore	4	22	18.2	P Hide	5	37	13.5
J Gifford	9	56	16.1	R Thornton	3	42	7.1
D Gandolfo	8	54	14.8	B Powell	3	55	5.5

2.20 LADBROKE HANDICAP CHASE
(£6,970: 2m 6f) (6 runners)

No	Form	Horse, owner, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
1	21-14F	GILLAN COVE 34 (G,S) (Forum Racing) R Alner 10-11-11	R Dunwoody	115
2	3-1221	BOOTS MADDEN 9 (G,S) (L Phipps) Miss V Williams 9-11-5 (6ex)	N Williamson	114
3	4-1333	BURNT IMP 32 (BF,D,F,G,S) (N Mason) G M Moore 9-10-13	R Garritty	121
4	16F-P4	COVERDALE LANE 30 (CD,S) (J Pilkington) Mrs S Smith 12-10-13	R Wilkinson (5)	124
5	/PP-61	CARLEY LAD 11 (S) (N Mason) N Mason 11-10-9 (6ex)	R Guest	121
6	104-P2	MAJORS LEGACY 22 (BF,S) (Mrs G Leigh) H Daly 10-10-7	M A Fitzgerald	[illegible]

BETTING: 6-4 Boots Madden, 3-1 Gillan Cove, 5-1 Burnt Imp, 11-2 Majors Legacy, 8-1 Carley Lad, 14-1 Coverdale Lane.

FORM FOCUS: Gillan Cove fell in handicap chase at Chepstow (3m 2f 110yd, good), previously a distance 4th of 5 to Splendid in novice chase at Cheltenham (3m 1f, good). Boots Madden beat Kinnahalla 26l in 12-runner handicap chase at Stratford (3m, heavy). Burnt Imp 8¼l 3rd of 6 to Santa Concerto in handicap chase at Ayr (3m 1f, soft). Coverdale Lane 24l 4th of 8 to Auto Pilot in handicap chase at Leicester (2m 7f 110yd, good). Carley Lad beat Inch Way ¾l in 8-runner novice handicap chase at Wetherby (2m 4f 110yd, soft). Majors Legacy 7l 2nd of 7 to Sparkling Cone in handicap chase at Towcester (3m 1f, soft)

BOOTS MADDEN, impressive last time, holds every chance of following up

2.50 WINNING FORMULA FOR WEDDINGS JUVENILE NOVICES HURDLE
(4-Y-O: £2,285: 2m) (6 runners)

No	Form	Horse, owner, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
1		DMOWSKI (P Saunders And R George) N Twiston-Davies 10-10	T Jenks	—
2		EL FUERTE 130F (T Dawkins) W Clay 10-10	R Widger (5)	—
3		GOODWOOD CAVALIER 219F (C B Brookes) Miss V Williams 10-10	N Williamson	—
4	5	BOW BELLS 25 (J Joseph) J Joseph 10-5	J Goldstein (5)	[illegible]
5		MAGNI MOMENTI 52F (Miss S Clarke) J S Moore 10-5	S Durack	—
6	0PU	RUBY BEAR 20 (D Kirkland) W Brisbourne 10-5	M Brennan	—

BETTING: 11-8 Dmowski, 6-4 Goodwood Cavalier, 8-1 Bow Bells, 12-1 Magni Momenti, 14-1 Ruby Bear, 16-1 El Fuerte.

FORM FOCUS: El Fuerte Perpendicular gelding, half-brother to numerous winners. Goodwood Cavalier Efisio colt, half-brother to 7f winner Brass Tacks and sprinter Dance Focus. Bow Bells 47l 5th of 10 to Sadler's Secret in 3yo maiden hurdle at Plumpton (2m 1f, heavy). Magni Momenti King's Signet filly, half-sister to a couple of winning sprinters. Ruby Bear unseated rider in 3yo novice selling hurdle at Uttoxeter (2m, heavy)

BOW BELLS is a token selection in a weak contest

3.20 TOWCESTER MEANS BUSINESS HANDICAP CHASE
(£3,581: 2m 110yd) (7 runners)

No	Form	Horse, owner, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
1	541-32	BEATSON 10 (BF,CD,F,G,S) (Mrs E Gardner) R Buckler 10-12-0	B Powell	83
2	355-21	JOHN DRUMM 8 (D,F,G,S) (A Jenkins) P R Webber 8-11-13 (5ex)	R Garritty	98
3	-50232	MACHALINI 13 (Mr & Mrs D Gamble) T George 6-11-7	T Jenks	91
4	12-534	BEYOND OUR REACH 6 (CD,G,S) (Mrs P Bradshaw) R Hodges 11-11-6	R Dunwoody	[illegible]
5	P0-2FF	MR BOJANGLES 24 (G) (Mrs D Lousada) T Casey 8-11-2	D Gallagher	86
6	141-F1	COOL SPOT 24 (D,S) (D Howe) G Enright 11-10-13	R Thornton	107
7	3/P/P2	MR JERVIS 24 (F Rosenthal's Widow & Son) J Gifford 10-10-10	P Hide	107

BETTING: 3-1 Machalini, 4-1 Cool Spot, 9-2 Mr Jervis, 11-2 Beatson, 6-1 Beyond Our Reach, 7-1 John Drumm, 8-1 Mr Bojangles.

FORM FOCUS: Beatson ¾l 2nd of 14 to No Fiddling in handicap chase at Taunton (3m, good to soft). John Drumm beat Another Course neck in 5-runner amateur handicap chase at Fontwell (2m 3f, heavy). Machalini 1¼l 2nd of 7 to Oscar An Doras in handicap chase at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, soft). Beyond Our Reach 6¼l 4th of 8 to Follow De Call in handicap chase at Uttoxeter (3m, soft). Mr Bojangles fell in novice chase at Folkestone (2m 5f, soft). Cool Spot beat Mr Jervis (3lb better off) 2¼l in 10-runner handicap chase at Folkestone (2m, soft).

JOHN DRUMM can overcome his penalty in a tricky handicap

3.50 LEVY BOARD STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE
(£1,420: 2m) (8 runners)

No	Form	Horse, owner, trainer, age-weight	Jockey	Rating
1	31	NO QUARTER 22 (CD,S) (Mrs C Waters) K Bailey 6-11-12	N Williamson	69
2	3	ABALVINO 28 (I M S Racing) P R Webber 5-11-5	R Garritty	—
3		ATTO (S Clough) J King 5-11-5	L Cummins (3)	—
4	20	BALLYNABRAGGET 41 (Double Octagon) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-5	J Goldstein (5)	[illegible]
5	3	BROCKTON GLEN 24 (Mrs D La Trobe) R Buckler 6-11-5	B Powell	88
6		WELLINGTON (Mrs P T Orchart) N Gaselee 5-11-5	M A Fitzgerald	—
7	0	WELDSGIFT 17 (D Gandolfo Ltd) D Gandolfo 6-11-0	Sophie Mitchell	46
8		MOLLYCARRSBREKFAST (Mrs J Carr-Evans) W G M Turner 4-10-7	J Power (7)	—

BETTING: 11-10 No Quarter, 4-1 Abalvino, 6-1 Ballynabragget, Brockton Glen, 10-1 Atto, 14-1 Wellington, 20-1 Mollycarrsbrekfast, 33-1 Weldsgift

FORM FOCUS: No Quarter beat Needwood Lion 3½l in 11-runner national hunt flat race at Towcester (2m, soft). Abalvino 8l 3rd of 18 to Baccarat in national hunt flat race at Doncaster (2m 110yd, good). Ballynabragget 43l 13th of 22 to Eddy's Son in national hunt flat race at Warwick (2m, soft). Brockton Glen 6¼l 3rd of 12 to No Forecast in national hunt flat race at Folkestone (2m 1f 110yd, heavy). Weldsgift 24l 11th of 16 to Starting Again in national hunt flat race at Ludlow (2m, good)

NO QUARTER makes most appeal against some modest rivals

COURSE SPECIALISTS

LUDLOW: Trainers: G Balding, 5 winners from 14 runners, 35.7%; D Nicholson, 16 from 46, 34.8%; M Pipe, 23 from 91, 25.3%; K Bailey, 18 from 78, 23.1%; Mrs J Pitman, 5 from 25, 20.0%; N Twiston-Davies, 12 from 68, 17.6%. Jockeys: A P McCoy, 21 winners from 73 rides, 28.8%; J Osborne, 5 from 22, 22.7%; C Maude, 9 from 44, 20.5%; R Johnson, 19 from 102, 18.6%; O Burrows, 3 from 17, 17.6%; T J Murphy, 5 from 33, 15.2%.

SOUTHWELL: Trainers: M Johnston, 42 winners from 207 runners, 20.3%; Mrs M Reveley, 15 from 81, 18.5%; T Barron, 23 from 135, 17.0%; R Craggs, 5 from 33, 15.2%; J Eyre, 41 from 277, 14.8%; D Nicholls, 29 from 219, 13.2%. Jockeys: R Fitzpatrick, 4 winners from 14 rides, 28.6%; N Pollard, 4 from 18, 22.2%; R Studholme, 5 from 24, 20.8%; R Cochrane, 18 from 125, 14.4%; R Price, 8 from 59, 13.6%.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: BEATSON
(3.20 Towcester)
Brendan Powell takes over from an inexperienced rider on Beatson after two fair runs this season and he looks set to score.
Next best: Mithak
(1.00 Ludlow)

RUGBY UNION

Discarded clubs plan to disrupt new competition

BY MARK SOUSTER

A SECOND front in English rugby's increasingly bitter civil war opened yesterday when it was announced that legal challenges designed to undermine an Anglo-Welsh league are to be mounted early next week. Disaffected English clubs, among them Worcester, Bristol, West Hartlepool, Bedford, London Scottish and London Irish, who seem certain to lose out in the new structure, are planning to meet to discuss joint action.

Bristol joined Worcester yesterday in condemning plans that could deny them promotion from the second division of the Allied Dunbar Premiership. Nick de Scossa, the Bristol chief executive, said writs alleging restraint of trade would be issued ahead of the meeting next Friday of English First Division Rugby (EFDR), which will decide the number of Allied Dunbar Premiership Premiership first division clubs in a top Anglo-Welsh division.

Tom Walkinshaw, the chairman of EFDR, has suggested ten English and two Welsh clubs; the Rugby Football Union (RFU), 12 English and two Welsh. If Bristol and Worcester, who say that they want only to play by the rules as laid down in the Mayfair Agreement, win promotion, the best that they could hope for is a place in the second division of the Anglo-Welsh league. De Scossa indicated that this could spell financial disaster, with sponsors pulling out.

"We will be going the full nine yards. We can't allow this to go unchallenged," De Scossa said yesterday. He indicated that Malcolm Pearce, the Bristol chairman, would even consider buying control of a first division club in order to have a seat at the high table.

Despite soothing noises yesterday from Howard Thomas, the chief executive of EFDR, De Scossa reiterated that second division clubs had been excluded from all meaningful talks, which he said were being driven by a nnumber of clubs who see a link with Cardiff and Swansea as the answer to their predicament. Like Cecil Duckworth, the Worcester owner, he is angered that, yet again, ground rules are being changed in mid-season — and that after Bristol had been forced to lodge a £2 million bond over three years with the RFU as part of the summer rescue package.

"You can't suddenly change everything we have been working towards," he said. "The bond is tied to the Mayfair Agreement and if people want to change that, then they had better come and speak to us first. We will be doing something on the legal front. We could end up getting binned and we will do everything in our power to stop this."

The political developments yesterday overshadowed the arrival of Dean Ryan at Bristol as player-coach. Ryan, 32, signed a 3½-year contract after leaving Newcastle, with whom he won the league title last year. Although, in theory, he could be fit by April, Ryan said that he would not be playing again this season because of his neck injury. Instead, he would concentrate on his role as forwards' coach, a position that lured him away from Kingston Park and broke his long-standing partnership with Rob Andrew, the Newcastle director of rugby. "I have long-term ambitions in the game and I wanted to add coaching to my C.V.," he said.

Wasps and Saracens, Ryan's former clubs, fought out a 15-15 draw at Loftus Road on Wednesday night, a result that prompted very different reactions from their respective coaches. François Pienaar effectively wrote off Saracens' title hopes, even though they are only a point behind Leicester and Northampton, but having played two games more. By contrast, Nigel Melville remains upbeat about his side's championship chances.

TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leicester	14	11	0	3	423	236	22
Northampton	15	11	0	4	409	328	22
Saracens	16	10	1	5	476	335	21
Wasps	16	9	1	6	445	314	19
Newcastle	15	9	0	6	414	352	18
London Irish	16	9	0	7	393	369	18
Harlequins	14	9	0	5	373	349	18
Bath	15	8	0	7	381	317	16
Gloucester	16	8	0	8	335	341	16
Richmond	13	7	0	6	340	351	14
London Scot	15	5	0	10	286	365	10
Sale	16	5	0	11	376	468	10
Bedford	16	2	0	14	330	526	4
W Hartlepool	15	2	0	13	228	556	4

Ulster need McCall

ULSTER hope to confirm today the XV to play Stade Français in the European Cup semi-final in Belfast tomorrow (David Hands writes).

They first have to resolve a midfield problem. Having lost Clinton van Rensburg to Swansea and Stanley McDowell to injury, they must consider playing Mark McCall after an absence from the game of 18 weeks. McCall, the Ireland centre, suffered a neck injury last autumn and still requires clearance before he can play. If he does not receive it, Jan Cunningham is likely to move from the wing to partner Jonathan Bell against the French champions, who have named the same XV that sunk Pontypridd 71-14.

Joel Stransky returns from injury in the Leicester side to play Barking in the Tetley's Bitter Cup match at Welford Road tomorrow.

Probing for Leicester's weakness

Michael Aylwin visits the cup minnows with an experienced hand at the helm

Barking players knuckle down to their last-minute cup-tie preparations under the watchful eye of the wily Probyn

It is the inimitable magic of the cup to provide the minnow with the opportunity to frolic in the big pond with the big fish. In the FA Cup, they call it romantic, but, in the more attritional business of rugby union, romance can very often be the last word to spring to mind, as the waters of the pond turn a sickening shade of red.

One could be forgiven for anticipating such a scenario tomorrow, when Barking, of the Jewson National League second division south, lock horns with Leicester, leaders of the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division. Barking's windswept clubhouse near Dagenham stands on the verge of the thundering A13 and, with the refracted light from the futuristic Goresbrook Leisure Centre shimmering in the east, the Barking players limbered up for training under the floodlights on the far side of the pitch.

While they were snatching their precious moments of preparation after a hard day at the office, one imagined their opponents in the Midlands to be tucked up in bed, taking advantage of their professional status.

However, Barking have a few tricks up their sleeve and none have more than the man who will be packing down at tight-head prop for them tomorrow. Jeff Probyn is also the Barking director of rugby this season, having joined the club at the end of the last campaign, and he is a man with a more than passing acquaintance with Welford Road and rugby at this level.

He first played there in 1980 and among his favourite memories was the semi-final of the cup in 1990, when the Wasps team of which he was the cornerstone were awarded the winning penalty after a collapsed Leicester scrum. It was an incident, he recalls with a wicked grin, in which he was intimately involved.

Such gnarled know-how will be invaluable to Barking, as Probyn is wheeled out again to replace Paddy Dunston, who is on loan from Wasps but whom Wasps do not want cup-tied. Further experience can be called upon in the centre, where John Buckton, the former Saracen and England international, is enjoying the autumn of a distinguished career, and at scrum half, where Dean Cutting, another former Saracen, captains the side.

Although the game is being played at Leicester, it is officially Barking's home tie, but their humble abode will not cater for the thousands that would have been expected. Nevertheless, there will be travelling support of more than 1,000, which is some achievement, given that they usually attract about 250 on a good day at home.

The windfall from the cup tie will be gratefully received. Like most rugby clubs, Barking operates on a shoe-string budget, in which players are paid modest appearance fees, and that has been facilitated for some years now by the selfless support of Walker's Transport, whose chairman, Keith Parker, is a former player at the club.

Yet, as ever, it is the league that concentrates the minds of Barking, who are third in their division and chasing promotion. The adventure in Leicester is viewed as an exciting opportunity for some of their talented youngsters to test themselves.

"I don't want to set targets for the game in terms of possible scorelines," Probyn said. "I just want the guys to play for themselves. We'll be going out to play a full part in the game and to entertain, which is what it is all about."

And, with that, he trundled off to prepare for that last-minute scrum under the Leicester posts.

Time has arrived to give brave new world a kick-start

Gerald Davies calls on the rugby authorities to act quickly and make definite plans for the game's new league structure

According to the crystal gazers — and you may as well lend them an ear as to someone who is said to be an authoritative source — the clouds are parting and, by the end of the month, an extended league structure could be in place. However, with all the pitfalls rugby union has suffered, we should not be persuaded to put a wager on this. There are many difficulties in attempting to satisfy everyone.

This is a period of great turmoil within rugby union. With such uncertainty, dissention flourishes. There are corners to be defended, law suits to be threatened. There are opportunists at every staging post, every opposing voice must have his say. For every suggestion, there is a counter suggestion. In these circumstances, to take a step forward is fraught with difficulty.

At the moment, everyone wants to be part of the game at the highest level, where the stakes are high but where the rewards are exaggerated. Yet, as they all must realise, there is ultimately no place for everybody. Only a few can remain at the top. After all, this is sport, and a waywardly professional one, which means that not everyone will have an equal share. The truth, however unpalatable, is that competitive sport is about inequality; proving that one is better than the other. In other words, to create an elite. The present debate is an attempt to put into practice the best environment for that elite to be nurtured and for it to prosper.

At the moment, there are so many factions to take into account. There are different financial and playing structures to unravel, traditions to be borne in mind. There is prejudice and self-interest, bolshy parvenus and blazered bunglers and, attempting to steer a steadier course, a few wise men who are doing their best to keep the schemers in check, keep selfishness at bay and seek a vision of where the game might be, say, in a decade's time. The decision they come to must bear such a timescale in mind. There can be no quick fixes. Part of rugby's present problem is that too many people jump too soon to stake a claim in a game of unforeseeable or unrealistic prospects. They cannot see the wood for the trees.

Yet most interested parties understand that something has to be done. Decisions need to be made. There is a need to move forward with a definite plan and so create a rugby season that is attractively competitive and provides the best possible chance to raise the standard of European rugby.

It seems Worcester believe that the Allied Dunbar Premiership is good enough as it is. Nothing else is needed, its officials claim boldly. For their immediate purposes, they may well be right. For the next year, it may remain the case — and the year after that, and more perhaps — but, at some stage, this narrow view, if it persists, will be detrimental to the game overall in Europe. The game in Wales will decline, as it will, no doubt, in Scotland. This may not be England's concern for now, but, in time, given that neither country will be able to provide adequate opposition, it will ultimately affect the interest of England's international game, financially as well as in every other respect.

When England toured the southern hemisphere with a depleted squad in the summer, and suffered, the response from both Australia and New Zealand was to suggest that, in their own best interests, they should look to develop rugby in other countries in their region, as well as to encourage Argentina and the United States. Since they could no longer rely, they said, on the four home unions to do so, the time had come when they needed to look elsewhere for more appropriate opposition — and enough of it — in the future. With such a broad vision, is it any wonder they continue to be ahead of the pack? England should be similarly aware of what is going on around its own boundaries.

Ireland have stated that they no longer wish to be part of an extended league. They appear to be in a better condition than the other three home union countries. Ireland have an internal club structure that leads upwards to the inter-provincial championship, but whose insularity is alleviated by their participation in the European Cup. International rugby is at the pinnacle. This resembles the New Zealand model and is a recognisable ladder of succession. It is fine-tuning that Ireland now need.

Sadly, Scotland are in the throes of a thorough examination with no less a person than Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the former Lord Chancellor, as chairman of the inquiry. In an extended league, their two super clubs, Edinburgh and Glasgow, should be pencilled in at this stage at least.

There have to be compromises and there are obvious difficulties. Whatever happens, it is, unquestionably, going to be a painful process. With so many repercussions, no decisions should be expected to be easy. Nor are they going to get it right first time. Thus, to begin with, as many clubs as possible with a sound claim for inclusion should be accommodated. For this purpose, two Conference tables with ten or 12 clubs in each is the better choice. If they so wish, play-offs could take place at the end of the season for the top and the bottom places. If this appears to be a bloated season, then that is one of the prices initially to be paid.

The structure should remain unchanged for a stated period of time — say, three years. This is for stability's sake, so that the clubs know where they stand and have time to plan and prepare, knowing that their immediate future is not in the balance. At the end of that period, the scheme should be assessed and modified. It would be anticipated, for instance, that a culling process would follow, with, possibly, the creation of a first and second division. These are tough decisions to be made, but they have to be achieved or the moment would be lost.

NETBALL

New Zealand call English quartet

BY CATHY HARRIS

FOUR of England's most promising players have been invited by the All England Netball Association (AENA) to take part in a national clubs' cup competition in New Zealand.

Olivia Murphy, Naomi Siddall, Amanda Newton and Helen Lonsdale leave at the end of February for a tournament that could mean them being involved for up to two months. They will then join the senior England tour to New Zealand in May.

Liz Nicholl, the chief executive of the AENA, said: "It is a wonderful opportunity for the players to have a spell with New Zealand clubs and I'll be interested to see how they develop. It is ideal timing, especially with the world championship taking place in Christchurch in September, and I expect these four to play a big part.

"Twelve months ago, we couldn't have dreamed this would happen. It just shows how highly our game is regarded and I believe it's imperative to forge links with countries like New Zealand and the world champions, Australia."

Murphy, 21, from Derbyshire, said: "The programme is likely to be intense, as the competition involves at least two games a week. The sport has a very high profile in New Zealand and there are big expectations, but it is a fantastic opportunity to prove ourselves against some of the best players in the world."

Lonsdale, 23, is the only one of the quartet who was not a member of the England team that won a bronze medal at the Commonwealth Games, but she has earned a recall to the squad after recovering from a knee injury that threatened her career.

Siddall and Murphy have played key roles in Derbyshire's challenge for the English Counties League title and there is understandable consternation that all four players will miss crucial games for their clubs and counties.

Cheryl Dewhirst, the chairman of the AENA match and tournament committee, confirmed that she had received a request for a change in the fixtures and she added that a decision would be announced next week.



Forwards find hole in Trinity

Trinity Carmarthen 10
Harper Adams 17

BY MICHAEL AYLWIN



IN WHAT was traditionally unpleasant West Wales weather yesterday, Harper Adams managed to eliminate Trinity Carmarthen, the only remaining Welsh team in *The Times* Trophy. Wales now have no representatives in the semi-final, having provided two last year.

The relentless rain that preceded the game lifted miraculously just before kick-off, but it left its legacy in the puddles that littered the pitch. The home side, playing with the wind, rode conditions more effectively than the visitors in the opening stages, with Craig Warlow and Aled Thomas, the Swansea reserve half backs, keeping the ball in front of their forwards. The return was two smartly-taken tries created from Trinity's smoothly-functioning lineout. Mark Bowen crashed over from the first, before turning creator, when he broke from a ruck and fed Rhodri Thomas for the second.

For that first quarter of the game, the fire of the Welsh rose above the clinging surface, but, as the game wore on and the clutches of the pitch proved stronger, Trinity were sucked in and the more powerful Harper Adams forwards grew to dominate.

Harper Adams had earlier disposed of Durham in the group stages of the tournament through the might of their forwards and the signs for Trinity had been ominous when the first scrum of the day saw the Welshmen pedalling backwards.

The omens were then fulfilled on the half-hour, when Harper Adams were awarded an attacking penalty and opted for the scrum. With Trinity retreating, the scrum went down and the referee awarded a penalty try, which, when converted, brought Harper Adams to within three points.

They took the lead on the stroke of half-time, this time kicking a penalty for touch. From the resultant lineout and drive, Scott Bemand, the scrum half, from Moseley, reached over to score. With the scoreline poised at 10-12, a further outburst of wind-driven rain reduced the game to a lottery, but the odds were weighted in Harper Adams' favour by the heaviness of their forwards.

Both sides laboured to retain possession of the ball, but Trinity were under such pressure up front that they struggled to win the ball on their own put-in to the scrum.

Trinity brought on Tristian Davies, the Neath centre, for Warlow, but this was no environment for backs, however classy, and, inevitably, it was the Harper Adams forwards that had the final word.

Again, they opted for a scrum from a penalty, this time some distance out. From there, they drove into the Trinity defence and created the space that allowed Alistair Brown to dive into the corner with a flourish and secure a semi-final in Cork.



MARTIN ELLARD

Corrigan, of Harper Adams, gets the ball away yesterday

SCORERS: Trinity: Tries: T Bowen (8min), R Thomas (20). Harper Adams: Tries: Penalty try (30), Bemand (40), Baron (74). Conversion: Powell.

SCORING SEQUENCE (Trinity first): 5-0, 10-0, 10-7, 10-12 (half-time), 10-17.

TRINITY CARMARTHEN: J Morris, J Young, G Barry (rep: M Bowen, 55min), N Vaughan, R Thomas, C Warlow (rep: T Davies, 55), A Thomas, J John, M Taylor, R Roberts, J Goddard, P Hinsley (rep: S Rees, 32), T Bowen, R Morgan (rep: R Turnell, 60), G Bennett.

HARPER ADAMS: M Turney, A Baron, P Renson, B Tyrell, C Loather, T Powell, S Bemand (rep: K Corrigan, 45), A Burns, J Dunlop, C Ingram, J Taylor, M Desborough, E Whitehead (rep: J Smith, 55), N Bland, R Sinnings (rep: P Scott-Priestley, 75).

Referee: H Wilson (Wales).

Hastings revives Watsonians link

BY ALASDAIR REID

SCOTT HASTINGS, who made the last of his record 65 appearances for Scotland two years ago, was appointed director of rugby at Watsonians, the reigning Scottish champions, yesterday. Hastings terminated his playing contract with the Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) last weekend in order to return to the Edinburgh club that he first played for in 1982.

Hastings has struggled to win a place in the Edinburgh Reivers super-district side this season, a factor that had a significant influence on his decision. Players contracted to the SRU are ineligible for national club competitions. Hastings is now free to turn out for Watsonians in their Tennent's Velvet Cup fifth-round tie against Melrose at Myreside tomorrow.

"I am delighted to be returning to Watsonians," Hastings, 34, who played twice for the British Isles against Australia in 1989, said. "To be employed as a professional player and not be afforded the opportunity to play at the highest level was an extremely frustrating experience. Now I can look forward to supporting Watsonians both on and off the pitch."

Initially, Hastings is expected to assist Andrew Ker, the Watsonians head coach. Although he has no formal coaching experience, Hastings, a centre, had been credited with guiding the careers of Duncan Hodge and Jamie Mayer, who are now regulars in the Scotland back division. With his elder brother, Gavin, he is expected to be heavily involved in player recruitment, public relations and marketing.

The return of Hastings to his club roots comes at a time of huge uncertainty for the future of Scotland's two super-district sides. The limited fixture lists of the Reivers and Glasgow Caledonians have conspired against their attracting widespread public support. Tonight, as they head for Wales to take part in the low-key Welsh Challenge Trophy, the SRU executive board will meet at Murrayfield to refine the remit of the independent review group, under the chairmanship of Lord Mackay of Clashfern.

The Union has collated suggestions from clubs regarding the group's brief, but both Murrayfield and club sources suggest that Lord Mackay will be granted licence to make his review as wide-reaching as he sees fit.

TENNIS

New year's resolution pays off for Henman

From Alix Ramsay in Doha, Qatar

QATAR during Ramadan is not a place where everything runs according to plan. Tim Henman, however, appears to have beaten the system and everything appears to be going well. Every day, another seed quietly packs his bags and last night Yevgeny Kafelnikov added his name to the list, losing 3-6, 6-1, 7-6 to Hicham Arazi. With Henman feeling in fine fettle, life could not be better — even the weather has improved from the last time that he was here.

With Arazi, of Morocco, playing poorly during the first set, Kafelnikov looked to be the odds-on favourite to reach the quarter-finals and, from there, possibly face Henman in the semi-finals. That would have suited the Great Britain No 1, because, as he puts it, it is his turn to beat the Russian

Mark Philippoussis and Jelena Dokic won their singles matches to help Australia to qualify for the Hopman Cup final in Perth yesterday. The hosts beat France 2-1 to finish level with South Africa, but they went through by virtue of a better record against the teams in their group.

— they seem to share their results alternately. However, Arazi is not one to pay attention to the formbook and suddenly turned on the style in the second set, kept pace with Kafelnikov in the third and moved to within striking distance of victory in the tie-break.

In front of a partisan crowd, not even Arazi's tendency to go for the outrageous when the simple will do could lose him the match. Despite slipping from 4-1 up, he still managed to win it 12-10.

With Arazi facing Karim Alami, his compatriot, in the next round, it means that Henman must again face the massed ranks of very vocal supporters in the semi-finals, should he beat Jeff Tarango today. Not that it worries him. "Yes, they are noisy at times," he said, "but it is a great atmosphere to play in and the players all enjoy it as the week goes on." Still, not much seems to be worrying Henman at the moment. Safely ensconced in the top ten and back in pole position in the British rankings, all is well with his world.

Henman spent his short Christmas break tweaking and tuning the finer points of his game and he appears to be happy and relaxed. His main focus of attention was his second service, which he feels was something of a liability 12 months ago. "At times last year I was prone to too many double faults," he said. "I am beginning to cut that out but still remain aggressive. You don't want to push it over the net, but I was trying to force it too much last year."

Last year, he reached the quarter-finals here before making the final in Sydney the following week — and then his world fell apart. He set off on a run of first-round defeats, beginning at the Australian Open, and seemed to be unable to pull himself out of the tailspin. To make matters worse, criticism of his game was aimed at David Felgate, his coach. Attacked from every side, it was not until Wimbledon that Henman could feel secure, taking a set from Pete Sampras in the semi-finals.

A year later, Henman is older, wiser and considerably higher in the rankings. In the coming months, Henman can only move in one direction and that is up. With only the points at Sydney to defend — a tournament he is missing this year to give himself more time to prepare and rest before Melbourne — he has a clear run of tournaments from which he can only gain ranking points.

With the likes of Marcelo Rios, who made a sprint start to 1998, and Carlos Moyà, the French Open champion, having points to defend by the truck-load, Henman could be knocking on the door of the world top five by the time he comes back to Wimbledon. Then life really would be sweet.



HUGH ROUTLEDGE

Participants reacquaint themselves with the practice greens and old allies before the President's Putter at Rye yesterday

Pabari has seen it all before

By John Hopkins, Golf Correspondent

IT MAY not be immediately obvious why the actions of two young children in a suburb in Cardiff and the play of several men competing yesterday in the President's Putter at Rye Golf Club can be linked together. What on earth can a 6-year-old and an 8-year-old have to do with Neil Pabari, the holder and the outstanding player in the event, and Jamie Warman?

The answer is that the draw for this event threw up a quite extraordinary coincidence. It provided Warman with the same opponents in his first two rounds yesterday that he faced in the semi-finals and final last year. Last year, Warman beat Rob Randall 2 and 1 in the semi-finals, precisely as he did yesterday, and then lost to Pabari, as he did yesterday. Working out the odds of this happening taxed even some of the brains of the Oxford & Cambridge Golfing Society.

"The draw is entirely down to my two children," Guy Leach, the society's amiable secretary, said. "They did it with bits of paper on the dining-room table a few weeks ago. The draw is just that, a draw. There are no seeds in this competition. That is part of the spirit of the event and, anyway, how would you do it? Someone like Charlie Rotheroe, for example, might hardly have played for a year. How can you assess what sort of form he is in?"

Pabari was level par after 14 holes and three up on Warman, who has reached three finals and been in the last four seven times in all. The match attracted a sprinkling of spectators and their dogs on a gentle spring day, one that was not as fierce as had been predicted. Pabari closed the door on Warman on the 9th, his 18th, by chipping stone-dead after driving to within five yards of the green.

He was gracious enough after the match to describe Warman's pitch to the 7th green as "miraculous, the stroke of the day". Indeed, he went on: "It was a shot worthy of Phil Mickelson: from a dip to the right of the green over a bunker to a flag set at the left and front of the green, he stoppd the ball four feet from the flag and then holed that."

One of the first matches of the day pitted Clifford Weight, a past secretary of the society, against David Mason. Their last meeting had been in the Varsity Match of 1975, which was staged at Hoylake. Much to the chagrin of Weight, who was the holder of the Putter that year — though undoubtedly much to Mason's pleasure — Mason won by 2 and 1.

Weight was itching for revenge and, as he bustled about the clubhouse on Wednesday, he was heard muttering: "Mason hasn't a chance. Mason is toast."

And so it proved. Weight brushed Mason aside, defeating him 7 and 6, and he wore a grin on his face having done so. "I have waited 24 years to do this," he said. Satisfying as it might have been, it was a short-term pleasure, because, in gaining revenge for that defeat nearly a quarter of a century ago, Weight played all his good golf. In the second round, he lost to Richard Guest-Gornal.

The last time that George Duncan and Brian Chapman played together was in a society match in the United States in 1979. What the two distinguished players lacked in length they made up for in steadiness. Duncan, who played for Wales, birdied the 1st and then holed from 15ft to defeat Chapman, a Walker Cup player in 1961, on the 19th.

RESULTS FROM RYE

SECOND ROUND: S J Bennett (C) bt S R Ashworth (O) 3 and 2; E R Dexter (C) bt B R Payne (O) 5 and 4; I M Henderson (O) bt M G Ebert (C) 1 hole; J N Davies (O) wo; A Chivers (O) bt M F Attenborough (O) 4 and 3; L B Wilkinson (C) bt J C Baily (O) 4 and 3; J Burdek (O) bt R W Krefting (C) 3 and 2; A P Stracey (C) bt G Colgan (C) 4 and 3; G Duncan (C) bt B Chapman (C) at 19th. R J Bisson (O) bt C J Dean (O) 6 and 5; A Edmond (C) bt C E Travers (C) 2 and 1; K Frearson (O) bt G M Langford (O) 2 and 1; W H Barclay (C) bt N J Grant (C) 3 and 2; M Bonney (C) bt P O J Grundberg (C) 3 and 2; R W Devlin (O) bt D H Garrow (O) 7 and 5; M Benka (O) bt G Huddy (C) 5 and 4, M J Dawson (C) wo, J Hudson (C) bt J-O Leach (O) 7 and 6; C P Harrison (C) bt D J Warden (C) at 18th; C G White (O) bt M G L Jerrom (O) 1 hole; R S Elworthy (O) wo; W J Ballhache (O) bt P F Gardiner-Hill (O) at 19th; A R Powell (C) bt P J Hill (O) 1 hole, J Nash (O) bt C G Nevill (C) 2 and 1; J H Palmer (C) wo, D T Sparrow (O) bt J R Hughes (C) 2 and 1; P M Guest (C) bt E Hawkes (O) 5 and 4, P A C Cogan (C) bt D G Burton (C) 1 hole; N J Burke (O) wo; D J Moody (C) bt R C P Seddon (O) 5 and 4; W S Rusted (C) bt G L Charlton (C) 1 hole; J G Parker (O) bt J Sanders (O) 3 and 2; G M MacSweeney (C) bt P J R Webb (C) 5 and 4; W H P Jackson (O) bt J J Firth (C) 5 and 4, T E Tew (O) bt A G S McCallum (O) 1 hole, P B Merry (C) bt R H Mitchell (O) 4 and 3; C C Ellison (C) wo; J C Hafter (O) bt P Bathurst (C) 4 and 3; J S Young (C) bt J Chene (C) 5 and 4; C J Dale (C) bt L Bradley-Jones (O) 3 and 2; S D Ellis (C) bt D S H Pardey (O) 1 hole; D J Youngman (O) bt S P R Jenkins (O) 4 and 3; D I Wilson (C) bt J R MacKinnon (O) 6 and 5; P Dawson (C) bt A C C Wong (O) 4 and 3; J Behrend (O) wo; D P Mather (O) bt A de C Aldrich-Blake (C) 3 and 2; M M Williamson (C) bt J M Peel (O) 7 and 6, B Webster (C) bt A C Hodson (O) 3 and 2; O Malik (C) bt B Streather (O) 2 and 1; J B Wild (O) bt R F H Petch (O) 1 hole, D L Rendall (O) bt A Orr-Deas (O) 6 and 5; W Dugdale (O) bt J T L Watson (C) at 19th, N Thayer (C) bt M Grint (O) 7 and 6, C Rotheroe (O) bt D E F Simons (C) 4 and 3; H Ritchie (O) wo, J B Tanter (C) bt A O Alquist (C) 7 and 6; R F Palmer (C) bt J R E Kent (O) 2 and 1; N Pabari (O) bt J Warman (C) 1 hole, J D Buck (C) bt T D Clarke (O) 1 hole, R Guest-Gornall (O) bt C Weight (C) 2 and 1; P Pentecost (C) bt R Lawson (O) 5 and 4; M R Jones (O) bt S Seman (O) 1 hole; B Keogh (O) bt G G Thomas (O) 3 and 2; M Yates (O) bt T F Sharp (O) 7 and 6

FOOTBALL

Platt hoping to discover winning ways

By Bill Edgar and Richard Hobson

IF David Platt needs encouragement as he attempts to make a success of his first managerial job at Sampdoria, it might be found in Giovanni Trapattoni, whose Fiorentina side inflicted the first defeat in the Englishman's reign on Wednesday. Both men have met objections to their appointments this season, but the Italian has overcome these to the extent that his side hold a three-point lead at the top of Serie A.

While some Fiorentina supporters had reservations over Trapattoni because he is a former coach of Juventus, their bitter rivals, the complaints about Platt's arrival last month came from other coaches in Italy, who are unhappy that he lacks the necessary qualifications for the job. As a result, Sampdoria are referring to Platt as an adviser and, just as for the 2-2 draw against AC Milan in his first match in charge, he watched the 1-0 defeat in Florence from the stands, rather than the bench.

Platt was joined in the stands by Lee Sharpe, a recent signing on loan from Leeds United, who may make his Italian debut when Sampdoria play Bologna at home on Sunday. His new side lost to a first-half goal by Rui Costa, which kept Fiorentina on course for their first league championship since 1969.

Juventus, the champions, trail their great rivals by ten points after a 1-1 draw at AC Milan. Paolo Montero, their Uruguay defender, was sent off for the third time this season, taking his career tally to 12, a Serie A record.

Juventus entertain Bari on Sunday while Fiorentina visit a Lazio side finally getting some reward for their £18 million outlay in the summer for Christian Vieri. The Italy forward, out injured since late September, scored his first league goal for the Rome club in a 1-0 victory away to Bologna on Wednesday.

Atlético Madrid, the club that Vieri left for Lazio, is preparing for a weekend match against Extremadura, whose win last Sunday over Real Mallorca, the leaders, took them off the bottom of the Spanish league table and underlined the close nature of the competition top division this season. To emphasise the point, Real Madrid could assume the leadership this weekend having spent the Christmas break in eighth place. The European champions followed their 4-0 win over Tenerife on Sunday with another home success in midweek, 3-1 against Salamanca.

Robbie Fowler, the Liverpool striker, has refuted suggestions that he had rejected the offer of a new contract. Fowler's present contract does not expire until the end of the 1999-2000 season, but Liverpool are eager to sort out the player's future, so as to avoid a repeat of the fiasco surrounding Steve McManaman, who becomes a free agent this summer and could leave for nothing.

There are a number of clubs in England and on the Continent that are interested in



Platt: complaints

Fowler and it is believed that Liverpool will try to persuade him to stay by offering a financial package that will make him the best-paid player at the club.

Nottingham Forest will hold more talks with Ron Atkinson after a plc board meeting at the offices of Nigel Wray, the chairman, in London today. Atkinson, who is on holiday in the Caribbean, is expected to accept the managerial post left open by the dismissal of Dave Bassett after Forest's FA Carling Premiership game against Coventry City on Saturday.

The board must agree a financial package laid down by Atkinson, which consists of a large bonus payment for leading the club away from the bottom of the table as well as money to spend on new players.

RACKETS

Smith can pose real challenge

By a Correspondent

JAMES MALE, of Great Britain, the reigning world champion, and compatriot Neil Smith meet in Chicago tomorrow in the first leg of the Lacoste world championship.

Male, the world champion since beating Willie Boone in 1988, is defending the title for the fourth time and a win would put him in the same bracket as Geoffrey Atkins, the world champion five times between 1954 and 1970.

Should Smith win, he will hold both the singles and doubles world titles, a feat last achieved nine years ago, by a certain James Male.

Off court, Male, an Old Radleian, is one of the dying breed of gentleman amateurs — he has worked in the City, has represented his county at squash and hockey and has even had trials with the Atlanta Braves baseball team. Smith is a full-time professional who learnt his trade as assistant rackets coach at Harrow School before leaving for Chicago ten years ago and joining the circuit.

On court, the contrasts are equally striking: Male, stocky and squat, bludgeons his way past opponents; the left-handed Smith caresses the ball around the court. They have met twice before to contest the world championship — Male won 6-5 in 1993 and 6-2 two years later — and countless times on the circuit.

At 35, Smith, who won the right to challenge Male by winning the British and United States professional singles titles, knows that, with his opponent devoting much of his time to real tennis, his chances of avenging the two defeats have never been better, but he will need to make use of home-court advantage in the first leg before next week's leg at Queen's, Male's home court.

HOCKEY: TITLE-HOLDERS IN CONFIDENT MOOD AS THEY PREPARE FOR START OF INDOOR CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP

Reading defend crown

By Sydney Friskin

TWELVE teams will be in action at two venues this weekend in the preliminary round of the indoor club championship to determine the six qualifiers for finals night at Crystal Palace on February 5.

Reading, the winners last year, will be in action at Cocks Moor Woods Leisure Centre, Birmingham, where, in pool B, they will face strong opposition from Loughborough Students, Firebrands, Old Loughtonians and Southgate. Loughborough, the runners-up to Barford Tigers in the Midlands counties championship at Lilleshall on Wednesday night, could prove to be the surprise package in the group, for they have Jason Lee and David Ralph in their ranks.

Reading's confidence was boosted in the DTZ international tournament last week, when they were runners-up to Vikings, of Denmark. Firebrands finished third.

East Grinstead, the runners-up in the indoor championship in 1998, are in pool A at Wyre Forest Glades Arena, Kidderminster, where Barford will be their main challengers. St Albans and Hull complete this group. The top three teams in each pool will go through to the finals.

Outdoors, the remaining fourth-round matches in the men's EHA Cup are expected to be completed. The withdrawal of Norton, of the Northern Premier League, means that Hounslow are automatically through to the fifth round, where they will meet Brooklands on January 17. Cannock, the holders, will entertain Harrogate today, while, on Sunday, Bowdon will be at home to Loughborough Students.

With the National League due to restart on January 24 after the winter break, new registrations show an increase in the number of overseas players playing in the competition. Greg Pierce, of New Zealand, and Benjamin Simes, of Australia, have signed for Hampstead, while Old Loughtonians have recruited Brett Stephen, of South Africa. Greg Nicol, the South African forward, has rejoined Surbiton.

Whalley nears comeback

By Cathy Harris

HELEN WHALLEY, the former England defender, is in line for a return to hockey at the highest level after rejoining Sutton Coldfield, who are battling to avoid the relegation play-offs at the bottom of the women's National League premier division.

Whalley, 28, was a member of the England squad at the 1994 World Cup and made all of her 14 international appearances in that year. She played her last league match for Sutton in April 1996 and hopes to play in the club's first game after the mid-winter break, which is against Ipswich, the leaders, at the beginning of next month.

Her decision to come back has been welcomed, especially by Jane Sixsmith, who has often had to fight a lone battle in a squad that has been affected by injury and the loss of experienced players.

When the league resumes, Brian Fraser, the Sutton coach, will have departed, with Mark Davies and Jo Nightingale taking on the coaching roles.

Whalley admitted that she had no thoughts of pursuing an England career, saying: "I just want to enjoy it all and have a run around. I've got absolutely nothing to lose and, with the club at the bottom of the table, I hope I make the first team and help them climb to safety. I don't mind where I play, as long as it's not sweeper."

Other movements during the Christmas period include Luisa Leisewitz and Ulrike Patschowski, two German schoolgirl internationals, joining Hampton in Arden and Tammy Nancoo, the Cambridge University student and Trinidad international, signing for St Albans.

Although officially the indoor season, four fourth-round EHA Cup-ties have been scheduled on Sunday after being postponed because of atrocious weather conditions. Leicester and High-town are at home to Sheffield and Sherwood respectively, with two more leading sides travelling to non-league opposition. Clifton, the holders, meet Dulwich, while Blackburn Northern entertain Slough.

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Runs to Resort	Conditions Off-p	Weather (5pm)	C	Last snow
Andorra								
Soldeu	60	80	Good	Open	Heavy	Sun	4	31/12
Austria								
Kitzbühel	20	69	Fair	Icy	Heavy	Fine	2	04/01
Obergurgl	35	150	Good	Hard	Varied	Fine	1	04/01
St Anton	30	280	Fair	Hard	Varied	Fair	1	04/01
Canada								
Lake Louise	105	122	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Cloud	-2	06/01
France								
Alpe d'Huez	50	170	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	9	04/01
Avoriaz	80	80	Hard	[illegible]	Varied	Fine	4	03/01
Flaine	50	189	Fair	[illegible]	Varied	Fine	2	03/01
La Clusaz	30	100	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Sun	0	03/01
La Plagne	55	150	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	4	03/01
Les Arcs	37	186	[illegible]	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	3	03/01
Megeve	40	80	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Sun	3	03/01
Meribel	30	100	[illegible]	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	2	03/01
Tignes	55	140	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Sun	0	03/01
Val Thorens	50	120	Good	[illegible]	[illegible]	Sun	5	03/01
Val d'Isere	65	135	Good	[illegible]	Varied	Fair	0	03/01
Italy								
Cervinia	30	150	[illegible]	Open	Heavy	Fine	3	03/01
Cortina	10	30	[illegible]	[illegible]	Packed	Cloud	-4	03/01
Livigno	20	30	[illegible]	Open	Varied	Cloud	2	04/01
Norway								
Geilo	80	68	Good	Open	Varied	Fine	-5	06/01
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	10	70	Fair	[illegible]	[illegible]	Cloud	1	03/01
Davos	25	125	Fair	Open	Varied	Sun	-6	03/01
Engelberg	15	90	Worn	[illegible]	Varied	Fair	-8	03/01
Klosters	20	125	[illegible]	Open	Varied	Sun	-1	04/01
Saas Fee	25	[illegible]	[illegible]	Icy	Varied	Sun	4	04/01
St Moritz	[illegible]	[illegible]	Hard	Closed	Packed	Sun	2	03/01
Verbier	10	185	Fair	Hard	Varied	Fine	7	03/01
Wengen	[illegible]	65	Fair	Open	Varied	Sun	9	03/01
United States								
Aspen	55	69	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	-10	05/01
Deer Valley	77	85	Good	Open	Packed	Cloud	-7	31/12

[illegible] L = lower slopes; U = upper slopes

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: London Towers 69 Thames Valley Tigers 92.

BOWLS

POTTERS LEISURE CENTRE, Hopton-on-Sea: World indoor pairs championship: Quarter-finals: W Richards and G Harlow (Eng) bt R Weale and J Greenslade (Wales) 6-7, 4-7, 7-3, 7-0, 7-5; S Rees and J Price (Wales) bt A Alcock and M King (Eng) 7-6, 3-7, 3-7, 7-3, 7-5. Semi-final: G Robertson and R Corsie (Scot) bt G Smith and A Thomson (Eng) 7-1, 5-7, 7-6, 3-7, 7-4.

DARTS

LAKESIDE COUNTRY CLUB, Frimley Green: Embassy world championship: Second round: R Scholten (Holl) bt C Stompe (Holl) 3-2; A Fordham (Eng) bt P Williams (Eng) 3-0; C Monk (Eng) bt T Littleton (Eng) 3-0

FOOTBALL

Wednesday's late results

TENNENTS SCOTTISH CUP: Second-round replay: Clyde 5 Spartans 0.
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Charlton 0 Watford 0; Ipswich 0 Portsmouth 1, Southampton 1 Queens Park Rangers 0; Tottenham 3 Brentford 0.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Aston Villa 1 Manchester Utd 5, Leeds 3 Birmingham 1. First division: Barnsley 2 Manchester City 2; Burnley 0 Sheffield Wed 4.
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Cowes Sports 0 Wimborne 0; East Cowes 2 Fareham 2; Hamble ASSC 0 Downton 1; Whitchurch 1 AFC Newbury 4.
MINERVA SPARTAN SOUTH MIDLANDS LEAGUE: Premier division: Brook House 2 Milton Keynes 1; Islington 2 Royston 2.
SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Chippenham 6 Calne 1
UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division: Eastbourne Tn 0 Shoreham 0
WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: Premier division: Canterbury 1 Hythe 0
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Second-round replay: Romford 3 Bishop's Stortford 2. Third round: Northampton 0 Chelsea 1; Stoke 0 York 3; West Brom 1 Nottm Forest 1. Third-round replay: Everton 4 Man Utd 0
ITALIAN LEAGUE: Bari 2 Perugia 1, Bologna 0 Lazio 1; Fiorentina 1 Sampdoria 0; Parma 1 Internazionale 0, AS Roma 2 Piacenza 2; Salernitana 1 Cagliari 3, Udinese 2 Vicenza 1.
SPANISH LEAGUE: Real Madrid 3 Salamanca 1.

HOCKEY

LILLESHALL: National indoor championship: Midlands qualifier: Barford Tigers 6 Leek 0; Loughborough Students 6 Leek 5; Stourport 3 Loughborough Students 5. Stourport 3 Barford 6; Loughborough Students 4 Barford 4; Leek 6 Stourport 4. Final positions: 1, Barford T 7pts. 2, Loughborough Students 7; 3, Leek 3

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Detroit 0 Ottawa 2, New York Rangers 2 New Jersey 5, Dallas 6 Vancouver 4, Colorado 2 Florida 2 (OT); Anaheim 2 Buffalo 3 (OT)

MOTOR RALLYING

DAKAR RALLY: Seventh stage (Tidjikja to Nioro, 625km): Cars: 1, M Prieto (Sp, Mitsubishi) 6hr 40min 28sec; 2, J-L Schlesser (Fr, Schlesser) at 12min 46sec; 3, J Kleinschmidt (Ger, Mitsubishi) 20:03. Leading overall positions: 1, Schlesser 29hr 44min 32sec, 2, Kleinschmidt at 15min 7sec; 3, Prieto 20:03. Motorbikes: 1, F Meoni (It, KTM) 6.31:38; 2, K Tiainen (Fin, KTM) 9:51; 3, T Magnaldi (Fr, KTM) 10 46. British placing: 7, J Deacon (KTM) 50:39. Leading overall positions: 1, R Sainct (Fr, BMW) 28.30:31. 2, Magnaldi 5.55. 3, Meoni 17:53. British placing: 8, Deacon 1:33:27

RUGBY UNION

ALLIED DUNBAR PREMIERSHIP: First division: Wasps 15 Saracens 15

LEADING SCORERS: 238: J Schuster (Harlequins: 3 tries, 20 conversions, 60 penalty goals, 1 dropped goal) 208: G Johnson (Saracens, 7t, 34c, 35pg) 201: K Logan (Wasps; 6t, 24c, 41pg) 172: N Woods (London Irish, 10t, 19c, 28pg). 164: J Wilkinson (Newcastle, 5t, 32c, 25pg) 162: M Catt (Bath; 2t, 25c, 34pg) 160: J Stransky (Leicester. 5t, 30c, 25pg) 135: S Howarth (Sale, 4t, 26c, 21pg) 129: M Mapletoft (Gloucester; 5t, 13c, 25pg, 1dg) Tries: 10: J Guscott (Bath), Woods. 9: N Back (Leicester) 8: B Daniel (Saracens), P Lam (Northampton), V Tuigamala (Newcastle), R Underwood (Bedford).
CHELTENHAM AND GLOUCESTER CUP: First round, second leg: Leicester 11 Rugby 23 (Rugby win 31-16 on agg).

SAILING

MELBOURNE: Laser world championship: First day (aggregate scores after two heats): 1, K Suneson (Swe) 5pts; 2, M Blackburn (Aus) 6; 3, F Westman (Fin) 7. British placings: 7, B Ainslie 11; 13, A Simpson 19

TENNIS

DOHA: Qatar Open: Second round: K Alami (Mor) bt F Squillari (Arg) 6-2, 6-7, 7-5, H Arazi (Mor) bt Y Kafelnikov (Russ) 3-6, 6-1, 7-6; M Zabaleta (Arg) bt B Karbacher (Ger) 6-0, 3-6, 7-5
PERTH: Hopman Cup: Switzerland 2 United States 1 (Switzerland names first: M Hingis bt L Davenport 6-3, 5-7, 6-2, I Heuberger lost to J-M Gambill 4-6, 4-6, Hingis and Heuberger bt Davenport and Gambill 6-3, 6-3). Australia bt France 2-1 (Australia names first: J Dokic bt S Testud 6-1, 6-3, M Philippoussis bt G Raoux 6-1, 6-2; Philippoussis and Dokic lost to Raoux and Testud 2-6, 2-6) South Africa bt Zimbabwe 2-1 (A Coetzer bt C Black 6-3, 6-4; W Ferreira bt W Black 7-5, 7-6, Ferreira and Coetzer lost on walkover to W and C Black).
HONG KONG: Challenge Cup: First round: S Williams (US) bt T Tanasugarn (Thai) 6-2, 6-1; A Kournikova (Russ) bt Fang Li (China) 6-1, 6-4.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Nationwide League

First division

Tranmere v Wolverhampton (7.45)

THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Third-round replay: Barnsley v Bolton (7 30)
LEAGUE OF WALES: Caernarfon v Rhyl (7.45); Inter Cable-Tel v Aberystwyth (7.30)
FOOTBALL LEAGUE YOUTH ALLIANCE: North West Conference: Preston v Blackpool (1 0).

RUGBY UNION

Welsh Challenge Trophy

Pool A

Caerphilly v Canada (7.15)

Pool B

Bridgend v Romania (7 15)

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser League: Milton Keynes Lions v Derby Storm (7.30), Birmingham Bullets v Sheffield Sharks (8 0)
ICE HOCKEY: Sekonda Superleague: Manchester Storm v Ayr Scottish Eagles (7.0)

SPORT IN BRIEF

Owner of Atletico is jailed

■ FOOTBALL: Jésus Gil y Gil, the mayor of Marbella, was jailed yesterday for allegedly funneling town hall money to Atlético Madrid, the leading Spanish club, which he owns. Judge Santiago Torres, an investigating magistrate, ordered Gil to be held without bail for alleged embezzlement and fraud. Gil's lawyer, José Luis Serra, said that he would file an appeal and denied the charges against his client.

■ CRICKET: Tony Cross has resigned from the management committee of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) after it was revealed that customs officers are investigating an alleged hotel VAT fraud. He was also a member of the ECB financial advisory committee. Cross, 53, chief executive of the Fownes hotel group, has also stepped down as vice-chairman of Warwickshire CCC and chairman of the Warwickshire County Cricket Board.

■ CYCLING: Colin Sturgess, the former world and national pursuit champion, leads the Great Britain team in the 12-day Tour of Langkawi next month. Sturgess will have alongside him Stuart Dangerfield, the British Cycling Federation 25 miles time-trial champion, Matt Bottrill, Janto Barker, the national junior road race winner, George Rose and John Griffiths.

Rob Hayles, who led Britain's pursuiters to a national 4,000 metres team record in August, started the Berlin six-day track race last night partnered by Andreas Waaltzer, of Germany.

SAILING

MacArthur gains backing for dream

Edward Gorman on a young woman driven by single-minded ambition

In one of the most exciting developments for British sailing in many years, Kingfisher plc, the retail group, confirmed yesterday that it is to sponsor Ellen MacArthur in her attempt to win the Vendée Globe single-handed round-the-world race in 2000.

The announcement, which came on the opening day of the London International Boat Show, follows MacArthur's stunning performance in the Route du Rhum Race from St Malo to Guadeloupe last year. Sailing in Pete Goss's Open 50, *Aqua Quorum* — renamed *Kingfisher* — MacArthur beat nine Open 60s and finished first in class and fifth overall in the monohull fleet. She was also the first woman to finish the race.

Kingfisher, a Europe-wide company with brands in this country including Woolworth, B&Q, Superdrug and Comet, came in at the last minute to pay for the charter of *Aqua Quorum* but had always intended the Route du Rhum as a test to see whether a full Vendée sponsorship was worthwhile.

The company has now made up its mind to go ahead and is backing the determined 22-year-old from the tiny hamlet of Whatstandwell in Derbyshire with a budget of more than £1.5 million. This is enough to pay for the building and design of a new Open 60 yacht plus all the race training and preparation that MacArthur will require in the run-up to the start of the Vendée in November 2000.

Sir Geoffrey Mulcahy, the chief executive of Kingfisher and a keen yachtsman, said that the choice of his company's first sports sponsorship reflected its belief in backing young people with the ambition to succeed. "Ellen has already demonstrated, through her professionalism, courage and commitment, that she is an ideal ambassador for Kingfisher and we are delighted to continue our support," he said.

The sponsorship is a huge boost for single-handed sailing in this country and represents the culmination of four years of total dedication by MacArthur to realising her childhood dream of racing single-handed around the world. Yesterday she admitted that she never thought that she could get to this position so quickly.

"To say my career path has been steep would be an understatement — more like a stepladder with a rocket on it," she said as she waited for the formal announcement at the Boat Show. It was only four years ago that she burst on to the scene after becoming the youngest person to sail single-handed around Great Britain.

'I'm not going just to sail round the world'

For that feat, in a little cruiser named *Iduna*, MacArthur was awarded the BT/YJA Young Sailor of the Year award. She then beat a path to the racing heart of England in Hamble, Hampshire, where she set herself up in a Portakabin and ruthlessly set about hunting down sponsors to enable her to complete her first single-handed ocean race, the Mini-Transat, in which she finished a commendable seventeenth out of 52.

That was followed by a two-handed Round Britain Race last summer before she set off on the Route du Rhum. Like many, MacArthur has been fired by the dream of achieving great things in sailing, but what sets her apart is her practical determination, her appetite to absorb new concepts and ideas and her technical ability.

Few who have worked with her doubt that she will become a formidable opponent in the tough world of single-handed ocean racing, especially now that she has serious money behind her.

Yesterday she committed herself to winning the Vendée,



RICHARD POHLE

MacArthur can look forward to taking on the best in the world in the Vendée Globe

which is likely to see a star-studded field of mainly French skippers, but may also include Mike Golding, of Britain. "My aim is to be in the top three, but I want to win," she said. "I'm not going out there just to sail round the world."

Over the next 18 months, MacArthur will devote time to race training in dinghies, one-designs and even match-racing to hone her tactical skills. She may sail in the two-handed Route du Café later this year and possibly take part in the Round Europe Race. Ashore, she is planning to spend as much time as possible learning about weather routing. "I want to learn the weather inside out and back to front," she said.

Mark Turner, her project manager, said that the design tender for the new boat was being issued immediately. Although Groupe Finot, the French naval architects, are favourites to win the contract for the new *Kingfisher*, Turner made it clear that he was not ruling out any designer at this stage.

Times Challenge, page 13

MOTOR RACING

Stewart wary of changes driven by sponsors

By Kevin Eason

ONE of the most influential voices in Formula One gave warning yesterday that the sport could be overshadowed by commercialism and millions of spectators could be confused if British American Racing (BAR) succeeds in its attempt to run two cars in different liveries this season.

Jackie Stewart, three times a world champion and now chairman of the Stewart-Ford team, stepped into the simmering row between BAR and the FIA, the sport's governing body. A decision on whether BAR, new to Formula One this year, will be allowed to field two cars under the totally different colours of the Lucky Strike and 555 cigarette brands of British American Tobacco, the team's £100 million sponsor, is now expected next week from an arbitration panel.

Stewart is convinced that the end of the tradition of teams having identical cars would make it difficult for spectators to identify teams and that it would damage the reputation of the sport.

Launching his new Stewart Ford car at the Autosport International show in Birmingham, he said: "This has tremendous ramifications for Formula One. When we entered Formula One, it was clearly stated that our livery would have to be consistent on both cars.

"But if BAR wins, the prospects of the cigarette-sponsored teams trying to maximise their exposure is very great. Perhaps we might even have two Ferraris in different colours. There could be a commercial advantage if, for instance, Kelloggs came into Formula One and branded one Rice Krispies and the other All Bran — at least we know which one would be fastest. It would allow companies to split their costs."

However, Stewart also pointed to the first grand prix of last season in Australia, in which David Coulthard moved aside to allow his McLaren team-mate to win. If both cars had been in differing liveries in that race, the sport would be open to accusations of favouring one brand over another for purely commercial reasons.

The impetus for the BAR challenge comes from cigarette companies desperate to get maximum attention in the period before the European Union implements a ban on tobacco sponsorship and advertising.

The Stewart team draws much of its backing from the Ford Motor Company. However, Ford does not see any advantage in branding its Formula One cars differently. Martin Whitaker, its director of European motorsport, said: "I don't think it would serve any purpose except to confuse everybody totally."

Ford's sponsorship has allowed Stewart to reorganise the team this year, bringing in Gary Anderson as technical director from Jordan and expanding the workforce to more than 250 at a new factory in Milton Keynes.

Answers from page 46

CATBAND
(b) A bar or iron for securing a door. A chain drawn across a street for defence. The exact sense is doubtful. "To make preparations for defence, to big up their own back gates, closes, and ports, have their catbands in readiness."

CREBROUS
(a) Frequent. Frome the Latin crebrum frequent. "The crebrous fame of your clemencie."

CULLION
(c) A testicle. Origin obscure, but with cognates in most Romance languages. Probably connected with the Greek koleos a sheath. Caxton, *Reynard*, 1481: "His ryght cullion or balock stone."

CATAPHRYGIAN
(b) One of a heretical sect in the second century who followed the errors of Montanus. A Montanist. So called because they originated in Phrygia. "The Cataphrygians who held that Christ not in body but in soul ascended into Heaven."

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

After 1 ...Kh7 2Rh5 is checkmate

TELEVISION CHOICE

Rallying for the cause

Country House
BBC2, 7.30pm

This 12-part series on Woburn Abbey will be pigeon-holed as yet another documentary soap and given its large cast of characters and running stories the label cannot be denied. Yet we seem to be in a different genre from wheel clampers and learner drivers. The material is more sedate and the treatment less brash, which is not to say that the show feels the need to defer to its aristocratic world. The main plot tonight is that Lady Tavistock, the current mistress of Woburn, agrees to open the estate for a stage of the RAC car rally and soon regrets it. Three cars end up in the deer pond and the surge of visitors causes the deer herd to stampede. Never again, says Lady T. But Woburn costs a fortune to maintain and if noisy and boring cars (her description) bring in money, she may to have rethink.

Garden Stories
BBC2, 8.30pm

This not being the best time of year for handy horticultural tips, BBC2 fills its Friday night gardening slot with a series which eschews advice and celebrates passion. Programme one is about gardening couples, of which there are many variations. The idea of partners in life also being partners in the garden takes a bit of a knock. Admittedly we meet Lesley and Steve, who are both obsessive gardeners and declare that the activity is central to a relationship which has lasted more than 30 years. Hazel and Derek can do better than that, having been married 41 years, but he does everything in the garden and she does nothing and they prefer it that way. David and Betty both enjoy gardening but have such different views about it that they have divided their garden in two. This gives them half an acre each in which to do whatever they like.

Gimme Gimme Gimme
BBC2, 9.00pm

Here is yet another comedy about flat sharers but give the writer, Jonathan Harvey, the credit for giving the familiar format a tweak. Linda and Tom may live together but they are definitely not a couple, for she fancies men (preferably Liam Gallagher) and so does he (ditto Simon Shepherd).



Michael Parkinson returns with a new series of talk shows (BBC1, 10pm)

Linda, aggressive and foul-mouthed, is played by Kathy Burke in an orange wig and white-framed specs. Much of her dialogue could have come straight off a lavatory wall. Tom bears a close resemblance to PC Goodie, the camp cop of Ben Elton's *The Thin Blue Line*, which is unsurprising as both are played by James Dreyfus. The gay-straight joke is squeezed for all it is worth in tonight's opener in which the pair wake up after a drunken night out to find a naked man in the flat. Both, in their different ways, dream of conquest.

Parkinson
BBC1, 9.30pm

If you cannot find a new show an old one may do, as the BBC discovered when it resurrected *Parkinson* last year after a gap of goodness knows how long. The series had hardly got into its stride before the audience figures demanded it should be extended and now Parky is back for another run. The appeal of *Parkinson* is that the guests matter, not the host, a reversal of Clive Anderson's shows which are a vehicle for him. The guests tonight include Geri Halliwell, who has much to talk about, having since her departure from the Spice Girls become a United Nations goodwill ambassador, campaigned for breast cancer awareness and sung *Happy Birthday* to the Prince of Wales. Dawn French and Carol Vorderman complete the line-up.

Peter Waymark

RADIO CHOICE

A Very British Story
Radio 2, 7.00pm

Sixty years in the life of any film industry is a mighty span of time and, ordinarily, it would be ludicrous for radio to attempt to tell the story in no more than four 30-minute programmes. Nevertheless, Michael Freedland has compiled, and presents, *A Very British Story*. Wisely I think, he has put a personal stamp on his history of British cinema over the past six decades. It is the industry as he sees it. What to leave in? What to leave out? I have not heard tonight's opening episode, but I know that it includes snapshots of the best-known of our studios (Pinewood, Ealing etc) as well as interviews with some of the film-makers we usually associate with them (Bryan Forbes, Peter Rogers etc.)

The Ghost of Number Ten
Radio 4, 6.30pm

"Even when you're dead, you've got to live in hope." This is one of the better lines in episode one of what must be the most spooky political comedy series ever heard on BBC Radio. The eponymous ghost, a cockney prostitute done to death in No 10 for knowing too many incriminating secrets (Maggie Steed) is old Labour to the core, and the hope that keeps her "alive" is that one day, there will be a Prime Minister who is as died-in-the-wool Socialist as she is. As the present new Labour PM (Mark Williams) shows no signs of fulfilling her expectations, she summons the ghost of Aneurin Bevin (Ron Moody minus the Welshman's famous stammer) to help her. Steve Nallon and Turan Ali created this innovative sitcom.

Peter Davalle

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Kevin Greening **2.00pm** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Chris Moyles **6.00** Pete Tong's Essential Selection **9.00** Judge Jules **11.00** Westwood: Radio 1 Rap Show **2.00am** Fabio and Grooverider **4.00** Emma B

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Alex Lester **7.30** Sarah Kennedy **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00** Jimmy Young **2.00pm** Ed Stewart **5.05** Des Lynam **7.00** A Very British Story. Michael Freedland presents a four-part personal exploration of the British film industry. See Choice (1/4) **7.30** Friday Night is Music Night **9.15** Wuthering Heights (7/7) **9.30** Listen to the Band **10.00** David Jacobs **10.30** Sheridan Morley **12.00** Lynn Parsons **4.00am** Lata Sharma

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast with Julian Worricker and Victoria Derbyshire **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00** The Midday News with Annie Webster **1.00** Ruscoe and Co **4.00** Drive with Peter Allen and Jane Garvey **7.00** News Extra with Susan Bookbinder **7.30** Alan Green's Sportsnight. Alan Green and studio guests debate the week's sporting action. Plus, live commentary on Tranmere Rovers v Wolverhampton Wanderers **10.00** Late Night Live **1.00am** Up All Night

VIRGIN

6.30am Chris Evans **9.30** Russ Williams **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Bobby Hain **7.00** Wheels of Steel **11.00** James Merritt **2.00am** Richard Allen

TALK RADIO

6.00am Bill Overton & Sally Meen **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00** Lorraine Kelly **2.00pm** Anna Raeburn **4.00** Peter Deeley **5.00** The Sports Zone **9.00** Mike Allen **2.00am** Mike Dickin

BBC WORLD SERVICE

6.00am The World Today **7.00** News **7.15** Off the Shelf: The Brothers **7.30** Music Review **8.00** News **8.10** Pause for Thought **8.15** Westway **8.30** John Peel **9.00** News; (648 only) News in German **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Early Versions **9.30** Speaking of English **9.45** Sports Round-Up **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Assignment **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Focus on Faith **12.00pm** News **12.05** World Business Report **12.15** Britain Today **12.30** Wild Tales **12.45** Sports Round-Up **1.00** Newshour **2.00** News **2.05** Outlook **2.30** Multitrack: Alternative **3.00** News; (648 only) News in German **3.05** Football Extra **3.15** Small Worlds **3.30** Science in Action **4.00** News **4.15** On Your Behalf **4.30** Insight; (648 only) News in German **4.45** Britain Today **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Sports Round-Up **6.00** Newsdesk **6.30** Focus On Faith; (648 only) News in German **7.00** News Summary **7.01** Outlook **7.25** Pause For Thought **7.30** Multitrack Alternative **8.00** Newshour **9.00** News **9.05** World Business Report **9.15** Britain Today **9.30** People and Politics **10.00** Newsdesk **10.30** Insight **10.45** Sports Round-Up **11.00** News **11.05** Outlook **11.30** Multitrack Alternative **12.00am** Newsdesk **12.30** From the Weeklies **12.45** Britain Today **1.00** Newsdesk **1.30** Small Worlds **1.45** Short Story **2.00** Newsday **2.30** People and Politics **3.00** News **3.05** World Business Report **3.15** Sports Round-Up **3.30** Science in Action **4.00** Newsdesk **4.30** Weekend

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Nick Bailey's Easier Breakfast. Music to get the day off to a fine start **8.00** Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour. Plus, favourite pieces voted for in the Classic FM Top 300 **12.00** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones plays favourite music **2.00pm** Concerto. Mozart (Flute Concerto in D major) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Continuous Classics, plus sport updates and travel news **6.30** Newsnight **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Mozart (Symphony in F); Elgar (Cello Concerto in E minor); Tchaikovsky (Letter Scene from Eugene Onegin; Symphony No 5 in E minor) **11.00** Mann at Night **2.00am** Concerto (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths. The Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air Stephanie Hughes with music and arts news, including a review of the film *Little Voice*
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Mozart (Piano Sonata in C, K545); Rossini (Aragonese); Lalo (Symphonie Espagnole); Berlioz (Symphonie Funebre et Triomphale)
10.30 Artist of the Week: Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau
11.00 Sound Stories: Five Painters — Gustav Klimt
12.00 Composer of the Week: Poulenc
1.00pm Lunchtime Concert Hakan Hardenberger, trumpet, Simon Preston, organ. Bach (Prelude and Fugue in E flat, BWV552); Eben, after Chagall (Okna); Takemitsu (Paths: In Memoriam Witold Lutoslawski); Hakim (Trumpet Sonata)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras Ulster Orchestra under Jun'ichi Hirokami, Takuo Yuasa and Adrian Leaper, Barry Douglas, piano. Wolf (Italian Serenade); Haydn (Symphony No 99 in E flat); Mozart (Piano Concerto No 22 in E flat, K482); Brahms (Serenade No 1 in D)
4.00 Music Restored (r)
4.45 Music Machine with Tommy Pearson
5.00 In Tune with Sean Rafferty
7.30 Performance on 3 Ulster Orchestra under Robert Houlihan, Raphael Wallfisch, cello. Part (If Bach Had Been a Beekeeper); Peteris Vasks (Cantabile for strings); Maxwell Davies (Cello Concerto: Strathclyde Concerto No 2); Kevin O'Connell (North, BBC commission; first broadcast); Schoenberg (Chamber Symphony No 2)
9.10 Postscript: Fictuality — All At Sea by Pippa Gledhill (5/5) (r)
9.30 Quantz Flute Sonatas Rachel Brown, flute, James Johnston, harpsichord, Mark Caudle, cello
10.00 Hear and Now Verity Sharp talks to Irvine Arditti about a recently released CD of chamber music by Elliot Carter
11.30 Jazz Century Russell Davies presents a 52-part history of jazz (r)
12.00 BBC Symphony Orchestra A programme of music by Martinu recorded at the Maida Vale studios last year, prior to the BBC Symphony Orchestra's Barbican weekend. Conductor Jiri Belohlavek
1.00am Through the Night with Donald Macleod. 1.00 Monte Carlo PO under Evelino Pido, Uto Ughi, violin. Verdi (Overture: Sicilian Vespers); Beethoven (Violin Concerto in D); Borodin (Symphony No 2 in B minor) **2.55** Schubert (String Quartet in D minor, D810, Death and the Maiden) **4.05** Strauss (Burleske in D minor) **5.25** Crusell (Sinfonia concertante in B flat)

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today Rural issues, with Charlotte Smith
6.00 Today introduced by Sue MacGregor and Winifred Robinson
9.00 Desert Island Discs Dave Brubeck (r)
9.45 (FM) Serial: The Vanished World (5/5)
9.45 (LW) An Act of Worship
10.00 Woman's Hour with Jenni Murray
11.00 Sentimental Journey Arthur Smith tags along as Eric Newby revisits Fontanello in Italy (r)
11.30 The Oldest Member: Chester Forgets Himself by P.G. Wodehouse. Maurice Denham stars as the golf club veteran
12.00 (FM) News 12.04pm You and Yours Liz Barclay and John Waite tackle consumer concerns
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
1.00 The World at One with Nick Clarke
1.30 Screen Test Brian Sibley chairs the last semi-final of the film quiz, from the Cambridge Arts Cinema
2.00 The Archers Another chance to hear yesterday's edition (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: Jerusalem North West by Vanessa Rosenthal. A Jewish convert recalls a man she once fell in love with. Starring Sarah Lancashire, David Fleesman and Brigit Forsyth (r)
3.00 Logged On New series. Five programmes in which Quentin Cooper and guests give advice on buying a computer (1/5)
3.30 The Melting Pot Tom Jaine samples the fare at a 400-year-old Slovenian inn
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Anna Massey narrates the history of Britain, drawing on the words of Winston Churchill, as read by Paul Eddington. Godwine and Edward the Confessor (r)
4.00 Bookclub The American author Jane Smiley discusses *A Thousand Acres*, her novel based on the King Lear story, with James Naughtie (r)
4.30 The Message Alex Brodie and his guests discuss current media trends
5.00 PM with Clare English
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 The Ghost of Number Ten New series. Political farce by Steve Nallon and Turan Ali, about a new Labour Prime Minister whose life is made a misery by the ghost of a murdered Victorian prostitute with strong socialist convictions. Maggie Steed and Mark Williams star. See Choice (1/6)
7.00 The Archers Pat becomes the hero of the hour
7.15 Front Row Francine Stock reviews new paperbacks
7.45 Under One Roof The last of three stories by Michele Hanson (r)
8.00 Any Questions? Jonathan Dimbleby is joined in Staffordshire, by guests including the Shadow Social Security Secretary Iain Duncan Smith
8.45 Letter from America Alistair Cooke with another slice of life stateside
9.00 The Friday Play: The Year of the Tiger by Tina Pepler. A man undertaking an unusual assignment in Bangladesh is entranced by the tigers he finds there. Starring Paul Bazely and Emily Joyce
10.00 The World Tonight
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Nana Part five of Emile Zola's novel about the Parisian demi-monde, read by Juliet Stevenson
11.00 Late Night on 4: Late Tackle Sporting conversation
11.30 Sporting Philanthropists Profile of the multi-millionaire property developer John Beckwith, who has financed PE teaching in primary schools for the past four years (2/3)
12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: The Restraint of Beasts Gavin Muir reads the final part of Magnus Mills's story
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089.

Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

So when did your wife stop beating you?

The flyer that fluttered out of our bundle of daily papers yesterday morning yelled: "Scared to go home to your wife tonight?" Evidently Channel 4's marketing wizards felt they were onto something juicy with last night's **Dispatches** on battered men and went for the hard sell.

This approach puts the series at one end of a spectrum which runs through *Neighbours (or whoever) From Hell*, past the brawling barrage balloons of *The Jerry Springer Show* to the grotesque theatre of American wrestling. This is a shame, because there is much more to this serious, well-intentioned series than gawping at emotional incontinence.

But you can feel the boys in suits with the ratings print-outs breathing down their necks all the way through the programme. The conventions of "X-wishes-to-remain-anonymous" documentaries have always teetered on the ludicrous. The 1960s pioneers *Man Alive* made heavy use of silhouetted figures, mumbling their shame in bare studios. (This was nicely satirised by Monty Python in an exposé of men whose secret vice was to dress up as mice and attend illegal cheese parties.)

Last night's speciality was a thin strip of light across the eyes, which was particularly dramatic when the poor fellows started to cry. Except that a nasty little Sergeant Major in the back of my brain kept shouting "Pull yourself together, you big girl's blouse!" (This reaction, presumably, is precisely why some of the witnesses wished to remain anonymous.) All the other ingredients were there, including *the plangent piano music* and the tone of hushed gravity from reporter Deborah Davies.

A more serious fault is the front-loading of the programme, so that far more time is spent on the fun part, describing and detailing the abuse, than making much serious attempt at analysis or explanation, let alone discussing possible solutions. The line between earnest social concern and voyeuristic sensationalism is a very fine one, which the series seems increasingly willing to cross.

REVIEW



Paul Hoggart

But then the *Dispatches* team does have a knack of unearthing disturbing and often unexpected social problems and we should be grateful that anybody is giving them an airing at all. This programme was inspired by the arrival of a "flood" of letters from men, following devastating documentaries last autumn on violence against women.

Strategic advertising for victims produced 140 responses, of which about 100 were deemed to be valid. These respondents were sent questionnaires, which produced some horrific evidence: testicle-stamping, knife-attacks and an attempted smothering. Many assaults occurred while the man was sleeping, including slamming an ankle with a hammer, pouring bleach on genitalia and jabbing a *hair-grip down an ear.*

Two women batterers were interviewed. One was very remorseful, the other not particularly so. Neither could really explain why they did it. There were issues of jealousy, frustration and an overwhelming need to control, all echoes male violence against women. A correlation was suggested with experiences of violence in earlier life. If men didn't fight back, that seemed to make it worse. Intriguing issues, but that's another programme, which I don't suppose will be made.

No doubt some would claim that big, strapping men, including a serving police officer, getting bashed by their wives and girlfriends is an example of the topsy-turvy world created by women's liberation. Except that, as the programme repeatedly reminded us, these hair-ripping crotch-kickers are less than a tenth as numerous as their male counterparts.

And I expect they were at it in Saxon times, when men were men and children died young. The archaeological series **Meet the Ancestors** (BBC2) returned with a splendid new find to interpret: the well-preserved skeletons of an Anglo-Saxon warrior and his horse, surrounded by the graves of small children.

I once spent a weekend or two with Regia Anglorum, the re-enactment group which specialises in Saxon and Viking warriors. They greet these discoveries with a mixture of excitement and trepidation, in case the skeleton shows they have been holding their spears the wrong way.

Fortunately the body under the former baseball field at the USAF base at Lakenheath simply showed how they used to attach their horses' bridles. X-rays also indicated how the sword was made. This involved spiral twists of iron *and 79 different strips of iron. It* was beautiful and impressive.

The poor horse buried with his master was probably lame from arthritis in a rear ankle and had a depressed fracture of the skull from a pole-axe blow or some such. I expect the warrior's wife did that when the horse was asleep. They were buried surrounded by the graves of children, which presenter Julian Richards found touching, an indication that he was protecting them in death as in life. This naive assumption a *Dispatches* investigation would soon dispel.

"Knock, knock, knock!" go the Customs officers before bursting into action. "Who's there?" we reply. "Ivan!" "Ivan who?" "Ivan Improbableplot!" **The Knock** (ITV) returned for a new series with a breathless yarn involving hit-men, revenge assassinations and plutonium smuggling from Russia to South Africa via London. The series belongs to a tradition of *British television drama trying to* be an action adventure film (remember *The Professionals*?) and looking faintly ludicrous. I look forward to a series on the Inland Revenue's crack Outstanding Tax Assessment Recovery Squad.

BBC1

5.40am Faces of Islam (r) (T) (3924088)
6.00 Business Breakfast (70972)
7.00 Breakfast News (T) (49779)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (8807205)
9.45 The Vanessa Show (T) (5270175)
10.55 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (7146069)
11.00 Real Rooms (7156446)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (7126205)
11.55 News; Regional News; Weather (T) (1342601)
12.00pm Call My Bluff (87040)
12.30 Battersea Dogs' Home (T) (12224)
1.00 One O'Clock News; Weather (T) (42866)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (86830205)
1.40 Neighbours Madge and Harold offer Lou an olive branch (T) (65510021)
2.05 Ironside An idealistic youngster is snatched by a radical group bargaining for the release of one of their members. *With Raymond Burr (r)* (7803595)
2.55 Going for a Song (8798750)
3.20 The Weather Show (T) (2129601)
3.25 Children's BBC: Playdays (6924250) **3.45** Spider (9214601) **3.50** Smart on the Road (8630663) **4.05** Rugrats (9793683) **4.30** L & K Friday (1863866) **4.55** Newsround Extra (1257311) **5.10** Blue Peter (6732021)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (819040)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (359)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (311)
7.00 Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook New series. *EastEnders'* Sid Owen and Richard Driscoll, better known as Ricky Butcher and vicar Alex join chefs Ross Burden and Tony Tobin (T) (7408)
7.30 Top of the Pops The week's chart-toppers, featuring the UK's number one single (T) (595)
8.00 Vets in Practice Joe faces a tricky operation to amputate a fawn's leg, while Emma has an ethical dilemma over a much-loved family cat (2/10) (T) (6156)
8.30 A Question of Sport Quiz, presented by Sue Barker (T) (5663)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (3427)
9.30 CHOICE **Parkinson** New series of celebrity interviews starting with the former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell, comedian Dawn French and the ubiquitous television presenter Carol Vorderman (T) (502408)
10.25 Bird on a Wire (1990) FILM Mel Gibson and Goldie Hawn star in this frantic comedy chase thriller as ex-lovers relentlessly pursued by the police, FBI and a team of ruthless assassins. Directed by John Badham (T) (972069)
12.10am The Stand-Up Show With rising star Dan Antopolski (5123557)
12.40 The Big End New series. Simon Mayo takes a look at some bizarre beliefs in *pre-millennial Britain (T) (5169847)*
1.10 The Beast in the Cellar (1970) FILM A series of murders are committed in Lancashire, prompting rumours of a savage beast inhabiting the local woods. Thriller, starring Flora Robson and Beryl Reid. Directed by James Kelly (T) (2986373)
2.30 Weather (4970625)
2.35 BBC News 24 (21508083)

VIDEO Plus+ and VIDEO Plus+ codes
The numbers after each programme are for VIDEO Plus+ programming. Just enter the VIDEO Plus+ number(s) for the relevant programme(s) into your video recorder for easy taping.
For more details call VIDEO Plus+ on 0640 750710. Calls charged at 25p per minute at all times, VIDEO Plus+®, 14 Blacklands Trc, London, SW3 2SP. VIDEO Plus+® is a registered trademark of Gemstar Development Corporation. © 1998

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Hairy Jeremy (4994363) **7.05** Teletubbies (2165040) **7.30** Yogi's Treasure Hunt (2465427) **7.50** Short Change (3020392) **8.20** Taz-Mania (9098392) **8.40** Polka Dot Shorts (3124917) **8.55** Hairy Jeremy (6469514) **9.00** Johnson and Friends (7293330) **9.10** The Phil Silvers Show (6605137) **9.35** The Phil Silvers Show (5083663) **10.00** Children's BBC: Teletubbies (56755) **10.30** FILM: Sinbad the Sailor (65462934) **12.20pm** The Art (6119601) **12.30** Working Lunch (10866) **1.00** Johnson and Friends (73801750)
1.10 The Arts and Crafts Hour Japanese-style pottery and designing invitations for any occasion (2626392)
2.10 Darts: World Professional Championship Yesterday's sets (26810458)
6.00 The Simpsons A German firm takes over the nuclear plant (r) (T) (870427)
6.20 The Simpsons Bart mixes with the Mob (r) (T) (874243)
6.45 Robot Wars Craig Charles and Philippa Forrester present more motorised mayhem (T) (829156)
7.15 Electric Circus Entertainment magazine, presented by Claire from Steps (T) (794953)
7.30 CHOICE **Country House** New series charting a year's activities at one of England's grandest stately homes, Woburn Abbey (T) (137)
8.00 Gardening from Scratch Laying out and planting up a vegetable plot, renovating a garden pond and a guide to drought-loving plants (2/6) (r) (T) (4798)
8.30 CHOICE **Garden Stories** New series focusing on Britons and their gardens (T) (3205)



Kathy Burke and James Dreyfus star in a new sitcom (9pm)

9.00 CHOICE **Gimme Gimme Gimme** New sitcom focusing on the friendship between an unglamorous receptionist and a gay actor both in hot pursuit of their perfect man. Kathy Burke and James Dreyfus star (T) (1069)
9.30 Bang Bang It's Reeves and Mortimer Surreal humour with the popular duo, featuring a spoof musical performance by leading Labour politicians (T) (23330)
10.00 The Young Ones The guys strike oil (r) (T) (86311)
10.30 Newsnight Kirsty Wark and guests, live from the Millennium Dome (T) (905866)
11.18 Suspended in Time (T) (455514)
11.20 Young Guns Go for It! Profile of Eighties pop group the Human League (T) (579755)
11.50 Darts: World Professional Championship Highlights of this evening's quarter-finals (943446)
12.30am Weather (1385575)
12.35 Mo Better Blues (1990) FILM Denzel Washington stars in Spike Lee's vibrant portrait of a self-centred jazz trumpeter (T) (46404083)

HTV

5.30am ITN Morning News (83934)
6.00 GMTV (6922330)
9.25 Trisha (T) (2264156)
10.25 This Morning (T) (62792175)
12.15pm HTV News and Weather (T) (9597779)
12.30 ITN Lunchtime News; Weather (T) (93232)
12.59 HTV Crimestoppers (55485866)
1.00 Shortland Street Ruth returns with a vengeance (37934)
1.30 Home and Away Tiegan gives Joey an ultimatum (T) (43773)
2.00 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (2037885)
2.45 Dale's Supermarket Sweep (T) (211088)
3.15 ITN News Headlines (T) (2124156)
3.20 HTV News (T) (2121069)
3.25 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (2104392) **3.35** Timbuctoo (9210885) **3.40** Animal Stories (9291750) **3.50** Adam's Family Tree (8683717) **4.20** Gladiators: Train 2 Win (9790576) **4.50** Top Ten of Everything (9393040)
5.10 A Country Practice A neighbourly dispute ends in tragedy (7856458)
5.40 ITN Early Evening News (T) (424021)
6.00 Home and Away Tiegan gives Joey an ultimatum (r) (T) (799088)
6.25 HTV Weather (537804)
6.30 The West Tonight (T) (779)
7.00 Bruce's Price is Right (T) (2576)
7.30 Coronation Street Toyah has Les over a barrel (T) (663)
8.00 Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Big-prize game show (T) (1224)
8.30 Neighbours from Hell (T) (7589)



Simon Shepherd and Carli Norris in a new three-part period drama (9pm)

9.00 Tilly Trotter New three-part Catherine Cookson period melodrama, starring Carli Norris as a 19-year-old village lass whose life is turned upside down by her sweetheart's marriage to someone else. With Simon Shepherd, Gavin Abbott and Beth Goddard (1/4) (T) (3779)
10.00 News at Ten; Weather (T) (80137)
10.30 HTV News and Weather (T) (678243)
10.40 Friday Night's All Wright With Hale and Pace (916972)
11.30 Slipstream (1989) FILM Futuristic adventure, starring Mark Hamill as a cop chasing a runaway android With Bob Peck, Bill Paxton and Robbie Coltrane. Directed by Steven Lisberger (T) (52044972)
1.35am Short Story Cinema Beware of the Dog. Psychological thriller about a yuppie couple trapped in the home of a mentally disturbed recluse (6350199)
2.05 The Haunted Fishtank TV review (8859644)
2.40 Baywatch An eccentric dies, leaving CJ $4million in his will (r) (T) (6069441)
3.30 Trisha Shown earlier (r) (T) (8363793)
4.25 Soundtrax (60651267)
4.40 ITV Nightscreen (34765267)
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (31712)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30pm Central News (6113427)
1.00 Wish You Were Here? (37934)
1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (9135682)
2.15-2.45 Home and Away (212717)
3.20-3.25 Central News (2121069)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street (7856458)
6.25-7.00 Central News; Weather (636156)
10.30-10.40 Central News; Weather (678243)
11.30 Tales from the Crypt (23243)
12.00am Short Story Cinema (1657002)
12.40 FILM: Revolver (678002)
2.15 Box Office America (9193441)
2.40 SeaQuest DSV (6050793)
3.35 The Haunted Fishtank (14425625)
4.05 Central Jobfinder '99 (8156538)
5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (4440793)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except:
***12.15pm Westcountry News** (9597779)*
12.27-12.30 Illuminations (6121446)
1.00 Westcountry Update (37934)
1.30 The Jerry Springer Show (9135682)
2.15-2.45 Home and Away (212717)
3.20-3.25 Westcountry News (2121069)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away (7856458)
6.00-7.00 Westcountry Live (15311)
10.30-10.40 Westcountry News (678243)
11.30-1.35 FILM: Twilight Zone (52044972)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except:
12.15-12.30pm Meridian News (9597779)
5.10-5.40 Home and Away;
6.00-7.00 Meridian Tonight (15311)
10.30-10.40 Meridian News (678243)
11.30 FILM: In Pursuit of Honor (52044972)
5.00-5.30am Freescreen (31712)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30 Anglia News (6113427)
1.00-1.35 Upshot! (1450750)
5.10-5.40 Shortland Street;
6.25-7.00 Anglia News (636156)
10.30-10.40 Anglia News (678243)
11.30 FILM: In Pursuit of Honor (52044972)

S4C

Starts: **6.00am Sesame Street** (r) (21908595) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (47120330) **9.00 The Cosby Show** (r) (T) (16798576) **9.30 FILM: I Can Get It for You Wholesale** (T) (36852446) **11.10 Roots to Success** (18251392) **11.25 Collectors' Lot** (T) (40185205) **11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier** (r) (T) (24086885) **12.00pm Suddenly Susan** (T) (16701040) **12.30 Sesame Street** (38703514) **1.00 Planed Plant** (54574088) **1.00 Tecwyn y Tractor** (54574088) **1.15 Mymryn bach** (54562243) **1.30 The Village** (39137514) **1.50 FILM: Ride the High Country** (T) (34491750) **3.30 Hampton Court Palace** (T) (56483021) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One Highlights** (T) (56402156) **4.30 Dishes** (1/20) (T) (56491040) **5.00 Planed Plant;** Adar y Ddraig (28636430) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (56482392) **6.00 Newyddion 6** (T) (69361682) **6.10 Heno** (T) (95070779) **7.00 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (38531886) **7.30 Newyddion** (T) (56409069) **8.00 Cefn Gwlad** (T) (22236494) **8.30 Y Clwb Rygbi** (T) (47086791) **9.00 Stonehenge** (T) (97135974) **10.00 Brookside** (T) (54250682) **10.35 Frasier** (T) (67182885) **11.05 Eurotrash** (T) (18460327) **11.35 TFI Friday** (49069205) **12.40am The Divine David Presents** (4/6) (71391625) **1.15 Exploitica: Monsters A Go-Go** (23606996) **1.45 FILM: Guess What Happened to Count Dracula?** (76755915) **3.15 FILM: Circus of Fear** (92646354) **4.40 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

6.00am Sesame Street (63682)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (65717)
9.00 The Cosby Show (r) (T) (6162363)
9.35 I Can Get It for You Wholesale (1951) FILM Comedy drama, starring Susan Hayward. (T) (81336595)
11.10 Roots to Success (6623243)
11.25 Collectors' Lot (7794717)
11.30 Here's One I Made Earlier (r) (T) (7530)
12.00pm Sesame Street (70750)
12.30 Bewitched (T) (93214)
1.00 Pet Rescue The RSPCA (r) (T) (35576)
1.30 Earthscape The anteater (T) (79207750)
1.35 The Wrong Man (1957) FILM A family man is accused of being a notorious armed robber. Fact-based (T) (20396595)
3.30 Hampton Court Palace Assistant curator Jonathan Foyle questions the long-held belief that Henry VIII built the Great Hall's oriel window (T) (885)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One Highlights (r) (T) (392)
4.30 Countdown (T) (1856576)
4.55 Ricki Lake Gay couples (T) (4967934)
5.30 Pet Rescue Roadshow An injured fox is treated (T) (156)
6.00 TFI Friday With Kathy Burke, Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer (13953)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (466697)
7.55 Cuban Faces Jorge visits his goddaughter. Last in series (5/5) (T) (941069)
8.00 The Lost Gardens of Heligan The restoration of the famous Cornish *gardens (1/6) (r)* (T) (9866)
8.30 Brookside Niamh is devastated by Sinbad's decision (T) (1601)
9.00 Friends Chandler gets trapped in a bank's cashpoint lobby together with a stunning model (r) (T) (6137)
9.30 Streetmate Davina McCall visits Dublin and Greenwich to match-make single people (T) (25798)
10.00 Frasier New series. Frasier experiences a wide range of emotions as he struggles to cope with unemployment (T) (88779)
10.30 Eurotrash Unconventional beauty contests (T) (809243)
11.05 King of the Hill New series. Has Hank survived the gas explosion? (T) (979791)

Hank and the boys return for a new series (11.05pm)

11.35 TFI Friday Shown earlier (r) (415576)
12.40am The Divine David Presents A bus tour of London (4/6) (3485422)
1.15 Exploitica: Monsters A Go-Go Monster flicks (98064)
1.45 Guess What Happened to Count Dracula? (1970) FILM The vampire is alive and well, and running a restaurant. Horror spoof, starring Des Roberts. Directed by Laurence Merrick (582064)
3.15 Circus of Fear (1967) FILM A robbery leads police to a mysterious circus. Horror with Christopher Lee. Directed by Werner Jacobs, John Llewellyn Moxey (9415267)
4.35 The Dweebs (r) (48190248)
5.00 Pearl The mature student becomes Pynchon's assistant (r) (39354)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport (7035885)
7.00 WideWorld Part one. The life and work of Charles Darwin (r) (T) (9130088)
7.30 Milkshake! (6746361)
7.35 Wimzie's House (r) (9854601)
8.00 Havakazoo (r) (1294392)
8.30 Dappledown Farm (1293663)
9.00 Floyd Uncorked (r) (T) (2807175)
9.25 Russell Grant (r) (4829330)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (6653137)
***10.20 Sunset Beach** Ben rescues Maria (T)* (2251885)
11.10 Leeza (r) (2131311)
12.00pm 5 News at Noon (T) (1204779)
12.30 Family Affairs Chris makes a stunning announcement (r) (T) (9070408)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful Maggie's actions disgust James (T) (9139359)
1.30 The Roseanne Show The comedienne chats to actress Kirstie Alley (9079779)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (6490779)
2.30 Good Afternoon Daily entertainment, featuring dramatic tales in Liverpool Mums and antiques expert Eric Knowles. 5 News Update (4682243)
3.30 Can You Feel Me Dancing? (1986) FILM Moving drama about a young blind woman's attempts to gain independence from her over-protective family (9766934)
5.20 Sunset Beach (r) (T) (6215663)
6.00 100 Per Cent Quiz (5351088)
6.30 Family Affairs Jamie blames his mother for the divorce (T) (5335040)
7.00 5 News; Weather (T) (6494595)
7.30 Champions of the Wild Profile of koala lover Steve Phillips (T): (5331224)
8.00 Was it Good for You? Travel with Ailsa Greenhalgh (1/14) (6403243)



Fly-on-the-caravan-wall. Park boss Colin Saunders and family (8.30pm)

8.30 Holiday Park New series. Life at the Foxhunter mobile home park, where celebrities mix with holiday-makers on an eight-acre site (1/6) (T) (6482750)
9.00 Passport to Murder (TVM 1992) FILM Thriller, starring Connie Selleca as a wealthy socialite dogged by spies, hit-men and assorted gun-toting secret agents during an eventful Parisian jaunt. Directed by David Hemmings (25377048)
10.45 The People vs Jerry Sadowitz With Mark E Smith (5/8) (4853156)
11.15 Emmanuelle (1974) FILM A French diplomat's wife is initiated into a world of sophisticated sexual pleasures. Erotic adventure, starring Sylvia Kristel. Directed by Just Jaeckin (9668069)
1.05am Road to Ruin (1992) FILM A wealthy *businessman feigns poverty to test his* girlfriend's loyalty (7397199)
2.45 Strange and Rich (TVM 1994) FILM A pair of cops are thrown into confusion by the biggest case of their lives (1834151)
4.20 The Road (23007422)
4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H (3150460)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (6902925)

PAY TV: SATELLITE, CABLE AND DIGITAL

● For further listings see Saturday's *Vision*

SKY ONE

SKY BOX OFFICE

FILMFOUR

SKY PREMIER

SKY MOVIEMAX

SKY CINEMA

TNT

SKY SPORTS 2

SKY SPORTS 3

EUROSPORT

UK GOLD

SKY SPORTS 1



Anne Parillaud stars as a reluctant government assassin in Luc Besson's stylistic French thriller *Nikita* (FilmFour, 1.15am)

DISNEY CHANNEL

GRANADA PLUS

NICKELODEON

TROUBLE

BRAVO

FOX KIDS NETWORK

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

HOME & LEISURE

DISCOVERY

ANIMAL PLANET

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

HISTORY

CARLTON FOOD

LIVING

ZEE TV

SAILING 50
MacArthur ready to take on world's finest

SPORT

BASKETBALL 46
NBA hanging on Jordan's next move



ITF to appeal in drug dispute

Korda faces new threat to his career

By Julian Muscat, Tennis Correspondent

PETR KORDA, the Australian Open champion, faces a renewed threat to his career after the International Tennis Federation (ITF) announced that it would appeal against the ruling by which Korda escaped a ban after testing positive for steroids at Wimbledon.

Widespread condemnation from players greeted the verdict, three weeks ago, that Korda had established "exceptional circumstances" for the presence of nandrolone metabolites in a sample that he submitted in July. An independent appeals committee, established by the ITF, thus dismissed the one-year ban routinely imposed on those testing positive for "class one" prohibited substances.

The ITF remains as baffled as the players by the committee's decision. Brian Tobin, the ITF president, said that the verdict did not reflect his federation's wishes. "I want it to be known that the ITF is not happy," he said yesterday. "We proved our case and the maximum penalty is 12 months' suspension."

Tobin's words will resonate favourably with players, many of whom have been critical of the apparent leniency shown towards Korda. The fact that they rarely break ranks over significant issues underlines the strength of their feelings. Lindsay Davenport, the women's world No 1, amplified those concerns when she said yesterday: "I don't think anyone just takes pills without asking what they are . . . it was illegal."

Unsubstantiated rumours of drug-abuse have been circulating on the tennis circuit. They were fuelled yesterday by Jonas Bjorkman, of Sweden, who was tested regularly last year. "Why be tested 15 times if we are still not going to be really hard on those who are cheating?" Bjorkman said. "I think this is the worst decision the ITF has made. We have heard so many things that guys are positive and [the authorities] just cover it up. They are just so scared of putting it out."

Tobin insisted that the ITF, which regulates only the four grand-slam events and the Davis Cup, is "not sitting on any infringements of the code". The Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) Tour and the Women's Tennis Association regulate the majority of tennis.

The ITF appeal will be lodged today with the Court of Arbitration for Sport, which was established by the International Olympic Committee and is based in Switzerland. The court's ruling, which the ITF will accept without further challenge, is to be delivered by May 18.

The ITF is still smarting from what it plainly believes is a miscarriage of justice. Korda, of the Czech Republic, has protested his innocence, maintaining that he had "no idea" how steroids came to be present in his sample. But Deborah Jevons, the ITF medical executive director, said yesterday: "We cannot have players saying 'I don't know' and for that to amount to special circumstances. We are unhappy with the interpretation. The intent of the rule has been misapplied. Quite honestly, we cannot understand why the player wasn't banned."



Korda: tested positive

The ITF appeal against a verdict delivered through its own anti-doping programme is bound to raise questions of the efficacy of that process. However, Jevons largely dismissed those concerns, despite the fact that the ITF selects the three-member panel that comprises the appeals committee. "The committee is an independent body because we don't want to be the judge, jury and hangman in these cases," Jevons said. "Some lessons have been learnt, but, in proving the doping offence, the rule has stood up to the strictest scrutiny."

The only sanction applied against Korda saw him stripped of the world rankings points and $94,529 (about £59,000) in prize-money that he accrued at Wimbledon. Even then, the committee implied that it might have waived that sanction had it the authority to do so.

Further details of the case have come to light since the committee gathered on December 21. Transcripts of the eight-hour hearing run to more than 700 pages. After the first sample tested positive, Korda was offered numerous opportunities to reveal medication that he took. However, the list he supplied at the hearing did not contain anything that could be linked to the positive test.

Korda, 30, said last week that he was postponing retirement for 12 months in order to clear his name. However, when beaten in the first round in Doha on Tuesday, he said that the controversy was such that he might not defend his title at the Australian Open, which starts in Melbourne a week on Monday.

Henman benefits, page 49



The Delhi groundsman, R. S. Sharma, assesses the damage to the square at the Ferozeshah Kotla stadium, where a Test is due to start on January 28

Intruders damage Delhi Test pitch

Richard Hobson says right-wing demonstrators are determined to prevent Pakistan's tour of India

INDIAN officials have pledged to tighten security at their leading cricket grounds to prevent the first full tour by Pakistan for 12 years from being abandoned before it starts. The move follows an incident in which some 20 supporters of Shiv Sena, a right-wing Hindu party, dug up the pitch in New Delhi, where the first Test is due to begin on January 28.

Pakistan are sending a representative to India to assess the threat, for the militant extremists are believed to be planning more disruption.

Although Atal Behari Vajpayee, the Prime Minister of India, has said that the players will receive all the protection necessary, Khalid Mahmood, the chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board, acknowledged that doubt now surrounds the tour, while Hasib Ehsan, a former chairman of the Pakistan selectors, said that it should be cancelled.

Police made four arrests for criminal trespass and intimidation after the activists broke into the Ferozeshah Kotla stadium on Wednesday night, when there was only one policeman on duty. The protestors had time to pose for cameramen before police reinforcements arrived.

Sunil Dev, the Delhi cricket secretary, said: "Luckily, it was dark and also raining. They probably could not see, because there are only small holes on the wicket." Jayawant Lele, the secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, said that all the venues would be protected with immediate effect. "We will not fail in our duty to provide adequate security," he added. The incident recalls the sabotage at Headingley before the final day of the fourth Test between England and Australia in 1975. Vandals dug out holes and poured oil on to the pitch as part of a campaign to secure the release of George Davis from a 17-year sentence for armed robbery. The match was abandoned as a draw and four people — two of them American — were subsequently convicted.

In India, the potential of Shiv Sena to escalate disruptive activities is causing more concern than damage to the wicket. Jaya Bhagwan Goel, the head of the party's Delhi unit, has threatened physical assaults on the players and said that supporters of the party would "go to any extent" to stop the tour.

Shiv Sena opposes sporting contacts with Pakistan because of the on-going dispute over Kashmir, the cause of two wars between the countries since partition in 1947. Its members have also attacked cinema halls and campaigned for strict control of theatre, music and other forms of culture. Sabotaging pitches is a familiar tactic. Eight years ago, they did something similar in Bombay as part of a successful campaign to prevent Pakistan from visiting. Tours were also cancelled in 1993 and 1994.

This time, vandalism might strengthen the resolve of the hosts to stage a series that has the approval of both governments. Pakistan are due to arrive on January 21 for a two-Test series and the itinerary keeps them away from the Shiv Sena stronghold of Bombay. The second Test is due to take place in Madras, beginning on February 4. The teams will then participate in a triangular one-day series, which also involves Sri Lanka.

Pakistan have not played a Test series in India since the 1986-87 season, while India have not toured Pakistan since 1989-90. They have subsequently exchanged visits for one-day fixtures, but the prospect of another meeting before the new millenium seemed remote last year when tension grew over the testing of nuclear weapons.

Wasim Akram, the Pakistan captain-designate, believes that the series must go ahead. "We are going there to better relations between the countries," he said.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1609

ACROSS
1 Flavourless, spiritless (7)
5 (Carpentry) sloping edge (5)
8 Not flush; arrogant (5)
9 Hold fort while parents out (4-3)
10 Scott novel; *dottily moral (anag.)* (3,9)
12 Cry of discovery (6)
14 In short supply (6)
17 Porter musical; no rules! (8,4)
21 Malice (3-4)
22 Pronounce (5)
23 Buttery sweet; fake (5)
24 Long curls of hair (7)

DOWN
1 Ameliorated (8)
2 Berate (5)
3 Detachable fastener (7)
4 Formal discussion (6)
5 Confused-tongues tower (5)
6 Arriving traveller (7)
7 Plaster-supporting strip (4)
11 Actions (taken); coal seams (8)
13 Left bad feeling (7)
15 Hiker's raincoat (7)
16 Headband; cut of meat (6)
18 Curl; string (5)
19 Titus —, *I may be some time* hero (5)
20 Vassal's holding (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1608
ACROSS: 1 Daffodil 5 Puck 7 Precipitous 8 Rely 9 Ponder 10 Outset 13 Sip 14 Tattoo 17 Tycoon 18 Alum 19 Disobedient 20 Jolt 21 Satanist
DOWN: 1 Decrepit 2 Fury 3 Doctor's orders 4 Lepidopterist 5 Potent 6 Course 7 Planet 11 Spoilt 12 Tenement 15 Albino 16 Throat 18 Anon

Mistral blows ill-wind for Ball

By Russell Kempson and George Caulkin

PORTSMOUTH, the struggling Nationwide League first division club, suffered further indignity yesterday when the car of Alan Ball, the team manager, was taken back by the firm from which it had been leased. Earlier this week, the club was served with two winding-up orders in the High Court for outstanding debts.

Ball signed a four-year contract last summer, which included a clause entitling him to a company car. However, with Portsmouth believed to be £5 million in the red and losing £5,000 a day, the club's predicament has worsened almost daily. The loss of Ball's Mercedes is the latest twist in the sorry saga at Fratton Park.

Chris Wood, the dealer principal of Mistral Cars, said: "The car has not been repossessed, but was provided on a six-month contract in return for advertising and publicity. That contract came to an end on December 13 and we gave the club a week's grace. It was not a reflection on the club's financial position."

Ball accepted the car company's actions, but, not for the first time in the past few months, was left angry and embarrassed. "I'm afraid it's another slight on the club," he said. "It's degrading and I hate it. The football club should be well-respected in the community, but this shows how far our esteem has sunk. I can fully understand why they have taken the car back. It's very unfortunate."

Blue Star Garages, Portsmouth's parent company, is facing a winding-up petition over £435,000 allegedly owed to Try Build, the construction firm that built the Fratton End stand. The Inland Revenue has also lodged a similar petition, for the same amount, for unpaid taxes.



Ball: embarrassment

On Tuesday, Martin Gregory, the club owner and former chairman, met with Les Parris, the new chairman, and representatives of a consortium attempting to purchase Gregory's 97 per cent shareholding. They are believed to have resumed discussions yesterday.

Juventus supporters have called for the return of Gianluca Vialli, the Chelsea player-manager, to help to restore former glories. During the 1-1 draw away to AC Milan on Wednesday, on resumption of the season after a winter break, banners were unfurled that read: "Lippi in our hearts but Vialli for coach."

Marcello Lippi, the Juventus coach, is in his fifth season at the club and although his side have qualified for the European Cup quarter-finals, they lie in seventh place, ten points behind Fiorentina, the leaders.

Ruud Gullit, the Newcastle United manager, has signed Louis Saha, the France Under-21 striker, on loan. FC Metz have agreed a six-month deal with Newcastle for the left-sided player, with the option of a permanent move.

Gullit has been forced into action by Duncan Ferguson's groin injury, which, after surgery earlier this week, will keep the Scotsman out for up to six weeks. While hardly a prolific goalscorer at French domestic level, Saha, 20, is expected to provide a comparable physical presence alongside Alan Shearer.

Saha could be joined at St James' Park by Pietro Parente, Torino's Italy Under-21 midfield player. Gullit is understood to have made contact with the Serie B side with a view to a possible £2 million transfer, although Alessandro Pistone, the unsettled defender, almost certainly would be offered as bait. Matt Jansen, the Crystal Palace forward, may also be the subject of an imminent Newcastle bid.

England's interest rate set to rise

By Matt Dickinson

AFTER all the bad publicity that has emanated from the Football Association recently, there is good news emerging from Lancaster Gate at last. After more than six months of negotiations, the FA's commercial department is on the brink of announcing that it has found a company to sponsor the England team.

Although talks are still proceeding with up to five potential backers, the Nationwide Building Society is understood to be favourite to conclude a deal that could be worth around £11 million over four years. Sega, Mars, Ford and British Gas have also been involved in recent discussions and the FA hopes to make an announcement within a fortnight. Any deal should be concluded by the time that France, the world champions, visit Wembley on February 10, with the FA desperate to prove that its work goes on, despite the absence of a chief executive or elected chairman.

A spokesman for the Nationwide confirmed yesterday that negotiations were being held, although he would not disclose whether any deal with the FA would affect its sponsorship of the Football League, which is due to expire at the end of this season.

The Nationwide, which also backs England's 2006 World Cup bid, has paid the League £5.25 million over the past three years and has yet to take up an option to extend that contract. Up to a dozen companies have been linked with the sponsorship, but many were put off by the FA's original demand for £16 million over four years — four times the amount that had been paid by Green Flag, whose deal expired after the World Cup.

Companies such as Walkers Crisps, AXA and One2One dropped out of the running, but Ford, Sega, Mars, British Gas and the Nationwide all remained in talks after the amount was reduced.